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THE WORKS OF
CHARLES AND MARY LAMB

EDITED BY

THOMAS HUTCHINSON, M.A.
EDITOR OF THE OXFORD WORDSWORTH, THE OXFORD SHELLEY, ETC.

TALES FOR CHILDREN
POETRY FOR CHILDREN
POEMS
DRAMATIC WORKS

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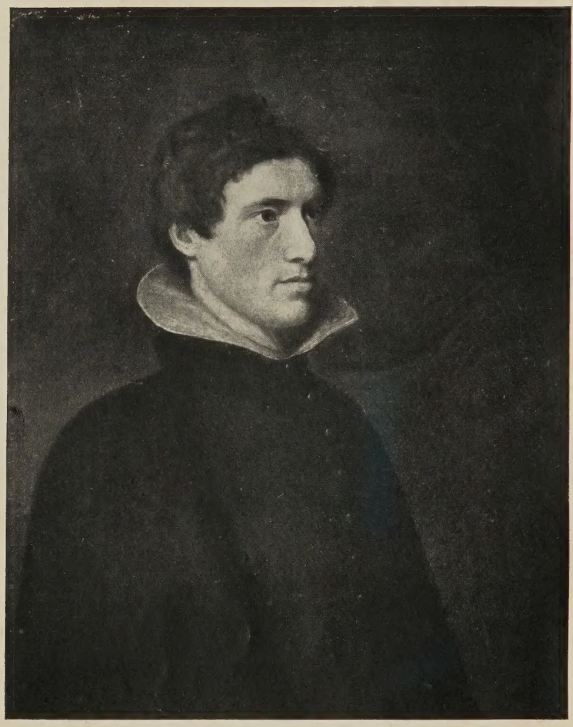

CHARLES LAMB, AT THE AGE OF 30

In the dress of a Venetian Senator

From the painting by William Hazlitt in the National Portrait Gallery

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PREFACE

The present edition of the works of Charles and Mary Lamb contains within two handy volumes (1) all that has been recovered hitherto of their literary prose, (2) the plays, dramatic fragments, prologues, and epilogues by Charles, and—saving a few relatively unimportant pieces excluded on the score of copyright—(3) the body of his and Mary's verse. This heterogeneous material falls at once into certain broad divisions : Miscellaneous Prose, Elian Essays, Tales and Rhymes for Children, Poems and Verses, Dramatic Writings ; within each of which divisions the contents are, in the following pages, printed in chronological series, the items coming as nearly as possible in the order of their original publication. Such an arrangement, however open to criticism on artistic or logical grounds, will be found to answer the needs of the ordinary reader as well as one more elaborate and precise, while it serves to bring into relief that covert yet omnipresent autobiographical significance which, for many of us, constitutes a main element in the value and complex charm of these literary remains. If it also lends to the contents, as here disposed, a desultory, not to say haphazard, effect, we must bear in mind that Charles and Mary Lamb themselves were desultory and occasional writers—not authors by profession. When, finally, it has been added that the chronological arrangement possesses the sanction of that very Leviathan amongst editors, Mr. E. V. Lucas, enough will have been

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said to justify its adoption in the present instance by a small minnow of the editorial tribe.

The text here followed is that of the latest edition revised by the author. Thus *Rosamund Gray*, *John Woodvil*, and the *Characteristics of Dramatic Writers* have been reprinted from Lamb's collected *Works* of 1818, rather than from the several originals published in 1798, 1802, and 1808. Again, *Elia* and the *Last Essays* have been reprinted in their final shape, as revised by Lamb for the volumes issued in 1823 and 1833—not from the columns of *The Reflector*, *The Examiner*, and *The London*, *The Englishman's*, and *The New Monthly Magazines*. But the earlier and the later texts have been collated throughout, and every substantial discrepancy noted: variations in word or phrase at the foot of the page; major differences—sentences and paragraphs recast, interpolated, or excised—in the Editor's Notes at the end of the volume. In this direction little, it is hoped, of material import has escaped, but there has been no intention to register every jot and tittle of the collation. A few merely editorial alterations, due to the meddlesome pedantry of Godwin—such as that from the first to the third person which the Preface of *Tales from Shakespear* shows in the later editions—are here ignored. Lamb's spelling and punctuation, so far as these are now ascertainable, have been preserved.

A bracketed note below the title of each composition gives (1) the date of its first appearance in print, and (2) that of its collection, or reception into the body of the 'Works'. By the collection of an essay or a poem is here meant its incorporation, not necessarily in one or other of the so-called 'Complete Editions', but in any volume dealing with the literary activities of Charles or Mary Lamb, and having the name of either, or the pen-name of Charles, on its title-page. Thus in the title-notes

referred to above, and in the remarks on the gradual formation of the Collected Works appended to the *Bibliographical List* in this edition, the sketch entitled *Captain Starkey* appears as having been collected in Babson's *Eliana*, 1864, rather than in the *Complete Correspondence and Works*, &c., published by Moxon in 1868–70; and—to come to more recent times—the *Confessions of H. F. V. H. Delamore, Esq.*, figures as collected in Mr. Bertram Dobell's *Sidelights on Charles Lamb*, 1903, rather than in Mr. E. V. Lucas's *Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, vol. i., which appeared later in the same year. In this way an endeavour has been made, with partial success, to assign to the proper quarter such credit as is due for the rescue of the several waifs and strays overlooked, or deliberately excluded from his collected writings, by Lamb himself.

In his brilliant and incisive General Preface to *The Works of Charles Lamb* (Dent, 1903) Mr. William Macdonald has sketched in broad lines the successive stages through which the work of collection, passed from hand to hand, has advanced with slow and halting progress towards completion. The appearance of a new edition of the text seemed to offer an occasion on which the facts rapidly summarized in Mr. Macdonald's able review of the subject might with advantage be presented in detail; accordingly, in the paragraphs (pp. xxxix–xlvii) following the *Bibliographical List* below, these particulars are, at some length, laid before the reader. An examination of the evidence as there set forth will serve to show that, of the many who from time to time have engaged in the work of collecting the literary remains, there are three to whom our gratitude is pre-eminently due—J. E. Babson, of Chelsea, U. S., Richard Herne Shepherd, and Mr. E. V. Lucas.

To J. E. Babson we owe the earliest and, on the whole, the most valuable supplement to the miscellaneous Prose

printed by Lamb in 1818. From the columns of *The London Magazine* Babson exhumed no fewer than sixteen of Lamb's papers, from Hone's *Everyday Book* five, from *The New Monthly Magazine* five, from *The Reflector* three, and one from each of the following : *The Athenæum*, *The Examiner*, and Wilson's *Life of Defoe*—in all, thirty-two articles. Besides these complete compositions Babson gathered together, under the heading *A Saturday's Dinner*, nine ' scraps and fragments ' of prose, being for the most part passages cancelled by Lamb when revising his magazine work for the volumes of 1818, 1823, and 1833. He also collected seven of the Tales, including *The Adventures of Ulysses* ; and he reprinted from Blackwood a Farce, *The Pawnbroker's Daughter*. His additions to the poetry, while of minor importance, amounted to a hundred lines of decasyllabic, and over a hundred lines of octosyllabic verse.

To Richard Herne Shepherd is owing the first notable increment of the collected verse, his gleanings in the field of prose being every way less considerable than Babson's. Shepherd reprinted ' in their entirety and integrity ' the early poems and sonnets from Coleridge's *Poems on Various Subjects* (1796 ; 2nd ed. 1797), and the blank verse from *The Monthly Magazine* (1796–7), *The Annual Anthology* (1799), and the little book entitled *Blank Verse, by Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb*, which appeared in 1798. He also collected Mary Lamb's sonnet, *To Emma Learning Latin, and Desponding*, her lines written *In Miss Westwood's Album*, and some half-dozen pieces by Charles, amongst them *The First Leaf of Spring*. But his chief service lay in the recovery of the long-lost *Poetry for Children*, by Mary and Charles, one-third of which (twenty-five pieces) he disinterred from two of Godwin's school-books and published in 1872 (Pickering), while in 1878 he reprinted

the whole from a copy of the first edition (1809) obtained from Australia, adding thereto a metrical tale—*Prince Dorus*—also recently brought to light, and incorporating the entire collection with the ensuing reissues of his *Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Charles Lamb*, originally published in 1874.

To *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb* (Methuen, 7 vols.), edited in 1903–5 by Mr. E. V. Lucas, every succeeding editor of the text will be bound to acknowledge a debt for new material amounting, in the division of Miscellaneous Prose alone, to about one-sixth of the whole. Coming in the wake of Hazlitt, Fitzgerald, and Ainger, Mr. Lucas has not been content to follow their half-hearted methods of research. He has gone to work steadily, raking and sifting the literary dust-heaps of the period, and has recovered an unexpectedly large and valuable residue of Elian Remains. Amongst the more noteworthy of these are a series of character-sketches, six in number, signed *Lepus*, retrieved from *The New Times* of 1825, seven articles from *Table Talk* in *The Examiner* for 1813, and a sheaf of literary reviews gleaned from various sources. Mr. Lucas has explored the columns of *The Morning Post*, with interesting if not very important results. To the *Tales for Children* he has added *The King and Queen of Hearts*, and to the body of the verse over thirty pieces, several of which make their first appearance in print in his pages. Of his many other services as the painstaking commentator, interpreter, and biographer of Charles and Mary Lamb, this is not the place to speak : suffice it to say that his work in these directions is known and praised of all men.

Of the new material embodied in Mr. Lucas's edition a very large proportion appears also in the ten volumes of the *Works* issued by Messrs. Dent & Co. in 1903, under

the editorship of Mr. WILLIAM MACDONALD; nor is it always possible to distribute with certainty, between these two contemporaneous editors, the credit of prior discovery in respect of a particular poem or essay. Working each for and by himself in the same field, they must have lighted independently on much of the new treasure embodied in their concurrently published volumes. It is, however, less as a discoverer of lost *Eliana* than as a discerning and rarely accomplished critic of life and literature—wielding the instrument of language with power and facile grace—that Mr. MACDONALD will be chiefly remembered in association with the lives and the works of Charles and Mary Lamb.

Such descriptive particulars as will be found in the *Bibliographical List* have been inserted with the hope of relieving in some degree the tediousness of a dry and lengthy catalogue. While (it is believed) fairly accurate so far as they go, they cannot pretend to scientific completeness. There exists a very full *Bibliography of First Editions of Lamb*, compiled by Mr. Luther S. Livingston for Mr. J. A. Spoor of Chicago. Mr. J. R. Tutin, of Hull, has lately published a *Bibliography of the Writings of Charles and Mary Lamb, Compiled and Annotated by J. C. Thomson*—a full and trustworthy record up to the date of Lamb's death (1834), but scanty and inaccurate in its account of posthumous editions. The Literary Remains still await a scientific bibliographer.

Acknowledgements are due to Robert W. Dibdin, Esq., for the use of Lamb's metrical epistle *To John Bates Dibdin*; to Mrs. Alfred Morrison for transcripts of Lamb's Acrostics *To Mrs. Field*, *To Sarah Thomas*, *To Sarah Lachlan* (*Un Solitaire*), *To Joseph Vale Asbury*, *To Dorothy Asbury*, and his Sonnet *To Louisa Morgan*; to Miss Kendall, for copies of the Sonnet *To M. L. Field*, the Acrostic *To Esther*

Field, and the *Epilogue* written for an amateur performance of *Richard the Second*; to the Trustees and the Librarian of Dr. Williams's Library, Gordon Square, W.C., for a copy of the Acrostic *To Mrs. Sarah Robinson*; to Gordon Wordsworth, Esq., for permission to use the Acrostic *To Rotha Quillinan*, and the *Lines on the Loss of Captain John Wordsworth*; to the Rev. J. Arbuthnot Nairn, Head of Merchant Taylors' School, for a copy of *The Taylorian* of March, 1884, and for leave to print therefrom the Epigrams, *Suum Cuique* and *Brevis Esse Laboro*; to Major S. Butterworth, and to the Editor of *The Academy*, for the Acrostic *To Emma Button*; to William De Morgan, Esq., for Lamb's Verses *To the Book*, his Epigram *To William Frend*, and his Acrostic *To Sophia Frend*. The Editor also desires to express his obligations to Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston & Co., for their kind permission to reprint from the late John Hollingshead's *My Lifetime* the Acrostic *To Sarah James of Beguildy*; to Messrs. Macmillan & Co., for their courtesy in permitting him to reprint from the 'Eversley' edition of the *Letters* (1904, vol. ii, p. 365) the Acrostic *To Grace Joanna Williams*; and to Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., for the privilege of using Lamb's *Notes on Godwin's 'Antonio'*. The *Serenata* written by Lamb on the occasion of the Cowden Clarkes' wedding, and his *Nonsense Verses*, are reprinted by arrangement with Messrs. George Bell & Sons, to whom the Editor is indebted for the use of the Epigram, 'Laura, too partial', &c.

For the loan of rare books and ready help in other directions the Editor has to thank Mr. T. J. Wise. The textual notes in this edition owe whatever accuracy they may possess to the practised eye of Mr. R. A. Potts, who must not, however, be held accountable for their shortcomings. To Mr. Lucas and Mr. Macdonald grateful

acknowledgements are offered for their patient attention to much importunate cross-questioning, and for their painstaking and helpful replies. To Mr. Lucas, in particular, the obligations both of the Editor and of his work are greater than he can express.

T. H.

November. 1908.

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL LIST (1794–1834)

OF THE PUBLISHED WRITINGS OF CHARLES AND MARY LAMB

In the following list titles and first lines are given in italics where the piece is printed for the first time.

1794

I. *The Morning Chronicle* (ed. James Perry), Dec. 29: Sonnet (No. VIII of *Sonnets on Eminent Contemporaries* contributed by Coleridge to *The M. C.* in Dec. 1794 and Jan. 1795), *Mrs. Siddons.*—'*As when a Child, on some long Winter's night.*' Signed S. T. C.[1]

1796

II. *Poems on Various Subjects, by S. T. Coleridge, late of Jesus College, Cambridge.* [Motto:] Felix curarum, cui non Heliconia cordi Serta, nec imbelles Parnassi e vertice laurus! Sed viget ingenium, et magnos accinctus in usus Fert animus quascunque vices.—Nos tristia vitae Solamur cantu. *Stat. Silv.* Lib. iv, 4. London: Printed for G. G. and J. Robinsons, and J. Cottle, Bookseller, Bristol, 1796. Small 8vo, pp. xvi, 188.

P. 51, Effusion VII.—'As when a child on some long winter's night'; pp. 55–8; *Effusion XI.*—'*Was it some sweet device of faery land*'; *Effusion XII.*—'*Methinks, how dainty sweet it were, reclin'd*'; *Effusion XIII.—Written at Midnight, by the Sea-side, after a Voyage.*—'*Oh! I could laugh to hear the midnight wind.*' Each *Effusion* signed C. L.[2]

III. *The Monthly Magazine* (ed. John Aikin), July: *Sonnet.*—'*We were two pretty babes, the youngest she.*' No signature.

[1] This sonnet next appears over the initials C. L. in Coleridge's *Poems*, 1st ed., 1796; again as Charles Lamb's in the 2nd ed., 1797 (see Art. X.); and finally without mark of authorship in the 3rd ed. (Coleridge's poems only), 1803. It was certainly Lamb's composition: see his letter to Coleridge, June 10, 1796.

[2] 'The Effusions signed C. L. were written by Mr. Charles Lamb of the India House—independently of the signature their superior merit would have sufficiently distinguished them.' *Preface*, p. xi. The first edition of Coleridge's *Poems* was published on April 16, 1796, in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($6\frac{1}{2} \times 4$ in.), with label, *S. T. Coleridge's Poems, 6s. boards.*

IV. [*Original Letters, &c. of Sir John Falstaff and His Friends; now first made public by a Gentleman, a Descendant of Dame Quickly, from Genuine Manuscripts which have been in the possession of the Quickly Family near Four Hundred Years.* London: Printed for the Author; and published by Messrs. G. G. and J. Robinsons, Paternoster-Row; and Murray and Highley, No. 32, Fleet-Street. 1796.[1] 12mo, pp. xxiv, 124, with engraved frontispiece on thick paper bearing inscription, *W. Leney Delin^t. et Sculp^t.*, and legend, *I must dance, caper in the Air*, &c.

Original Letters, &c. of Sir John Falstaff selected from Genuine MSS. which have been in the possession of Dame Quickly and her Descendants near Four Hundred Years. The Second Edition. Dedicated to Master Samuel Irelaunde. London: Published by Messrs. G. G. and J. Robinsons, Paternoster-Row; J. Debrett, Piccadilly; and Murray and Highley, No. 32, Fleet-Street. 1797. 12mo, pp. xxiv, 124, and frontispiece as above.]

V. *Poems on the Death of Priscilla Farmer, by Her Grandson Charles Lloyd.* [Motto:] Death! Thou hast visited that pleasant place, where in this hard world I have happiest been. *Bowles.* Bristol: Printed by N. Biggs, And Sold by James Phillips, George-Yard, Lombard-Street, London. 1796. Folio pamphlet, pp. 28. Pp. 25–7, *The Grandam.*[2]

VI. *The Monthly Magazine*, December: Blank Verse, *To the Poet Cowper.* Signed *C. Lamb.* Not reprinted by Lamb.

1797

VII. *The Monthly Magazine*, January: LINES *addressed, from London, to* SARA *and* S. T. C. *at Bristol, in the Summer of* 1796. Signed *Charles Lamb.* Not reprinted by Lamb.

VIII. *The Monthly Magazine*, March: Rhymed Decasyllables, [3] *To a Young Lady.* Signed *C. L.* Not reprinted by Lamb.

IX. *The Monthly Magazine*, October: Sonnet, *To a Friend.*—'*Friend of my earliest years and childish days.*' Signed *Charles*

[1] Southey, writing to Moxon, Feb. 2, 1836, says of James White: 'He and Lamb were joint authors of the *Original Letters of Falstaff.*' As there is internal evidence that Lamb had a share—which, however, he never claims—in the composition of this book, the titles of the 1st and 2nd edd. are given here. The 1st ed. appeared in July, 1796. It was issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($6\frac{13}{16} \times 4\frac{1}{8}$ in.).

[2] 'The following beautiful fragment was written by Charles Lamb of the India House.—Its subject being the same with that of my Poems, I was solicitous to have it printed with them: and I am indebted to a Friend of the Author's for the permission.' Note prefixed to *The Grandam.* Lloyd's folio appeared late in 1796, as a 'stabbed' pamphlet with marbled paper covers, size of untrimmed leaf $15 \times 10\frac{3}{4}$ in.

[3] Reprinted in *The Political Register*, iii (1803), p. 254.

Lamb.[1] Blank Verse, *To a Friend* (reprinted, *Blank Verse*, 1798, as *To Charles Lloyd*). Signed *Charles Lamb.*

X. *Poems, by S. T. Coleridge, Second Edition. To which are now added Poems by Charles Lamb, and Charles Lloyd.* [Motto :] Duplex nobis vinculum, et amicitiæ et similium junctarumque Camœnarum ; quod utinam neque mors solvat, neque temporis longinquitas ! *Groscoll. Epist. ad Car. Utenhov. et Ptol. Lux. Tast.* Printed by N. Biggs, for J. Cottle, Bristol, and Messrs. Robinsons, London. 1797. Small 8vo, pp. xx, 278.

P. 215 (half-title), *Poems, by Charles Lamb, of the India-House.* [Motto :] This Beauty in the blossom of my Youth, When my first fire knew no adulterate incense, Nor I no way to flatter but my fondness, In the best language my true tongue could tell me, And all the broken sighs my sick heart lend me, I sued and served. Long did I love this Lady. *Massinger.* P. 216 (Dedication), *The Few Following Poems, Creatures of the Fancy and the Feeling, in Life's more* vacant *Hours ; Produced, for the Most Part, by* Love *in* Idleness ; *are, with all a Brother's Fondness, inscribed to* Mary Ann Lamb, *the Author's best Friend and Sister.* Pp. 217–24, Sonnet I.—' Was it some sweet Delight of Faery ' ; Sonnet II.—' Methinks, how dainty sweet it were, reclined ' ; *Sonnet III.* —' *When last I rov'd these winding wood-walks green* ' ; *Sonnet IV.* —' *A Timid grace sits trembling in her eye* ' ; Sonnet V.—' O ! I could laugh to hear the midnight wind ' ; *Sonnet VI.*—' *If from my lips some angry accents fell* ' ; Sonnet VII.—' We were two pretty babes, the youngest she ' ; Sonnet VIII.—' As when a child on some long winter's night '. P. 225 (half-title), *Fragments.* (P. 226 blank.) Pp. 227–40, *Childhood ;* The Grandame ; *The Sabbath Bells ; Fancy employed on Divine Subjects ; The Tomb of Douglas ; To Charles Lloyd, an unexpected Visitor.* P. 241 (half-title), *Supplement.* Pp. 273–8, *A vision of Repentance.*[2]

XI. *The Monthly Magazine,* December : Sonnet.—*The Lord of Life shakes off his drowsihed '.* Signed *Charles Lamb.*[3]

1798

XII. *Blank Verse, by Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb.* London : Printed by T. Bensley, for John and Arthur Arch, N° 23, Grace-

[1] This Sonnet was reprinted in *The Poetical Register,* vol. viii (1810–11), p. 429, but was never reprinted by Lamb.

[2] ' There were inserted in my former Edition, a few Sonnets of my Friend and old School-fellow, Charles Lamb. He has now communicated to me a complete Collection of all his Poems ; quæ qui non prorsus amet, illum omnes et Virtutes et Veneres odere.' *Preface,* p. xix. This second edition appeared October 28, 1797, in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($6\frac{5}{8} \times 4$ in.), with label, *Coleridge's Poems.* 6*s.*

[3] This Sonnet was reprinted in *The Poetical Register,* vol. viii (1810–11), p. 430, but was never reprinted by Lamb.

church Street. 1798. Small 8vo, pp. 96. Issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($6\frac{5}{8} \times 4\frac{3}{16}$), with label. P. 73 (half-title), *Blank Verse, by Charles Lamb.* (P. 74 blank.) Pp. 75–95, To Charles Lloyd ; *Written on the Day of my Aunt's Funeral ; Written a Year after the Events ; Written soon after the Preceding Poem ; Written on Christmas Day,* 1797 *; The Old Familiar Faces ; Composed at Midnight. Blank Verse,* &c., appeared in March 1798. Lamb reprinted the last two pieces only (*Works,* 1818).

XIII. *A Tale of Rosamund Gray and Old Blind Margaret. By Charles Lamb.* Birmingham, Printed by Thomas Pearson. 1798. Small 8vo, pp. 136. Issued in blue paper covers, edges untrimmed ($6\frac{9}{16} \times 4\frac{1}{8}$ in.).

A Tale of Rosamund Gray and Old Blind Margaret. By Charles Lamb. London, Printed for Lee and Hurst, No. 32, Paternoster Row. 1798.[1] Small 8vo, pp. 136.

1799

XIV. *The Annual Anthology. Volume I.* 1799. Bristol : Printed by Biggs and Co. for T. N. Longman and O. Rees, Paternoster-Row, London. Small 8vo, pp. viii, 300.

Pp. 90–2, B. V., *Living without God in the World.* Not repr.

1800

XV. *The Piccolomini, or the First Part of Wallenstein, a Drama in Five Acts. Translated from the German of Frederick Schiller by S. T. Coleridge.* London. Printed for T. N. Longman and O. Rees, Paternoster Row. 1800. 8vo, pp. iv, 214. Issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($8\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$in.), with paper label.

P. 89, Verse-translation by Lamb of *Thekla's* Song, Act II, Scene vi.[2]

XVI. *Recreations in Agriculture, Natural History, Arts, and Miscellaneous History* (a monthly miscellany, ed. Dr. James Anderson), Nov. 1800: three extracts *From an Unpublished Drama by C. Lamb*

[1] The Birmingham title is the original one, the copies supplied to London having a reprinted title as above. *Rosamund Gray* appeared in the late summer of 1798. It was reprinted in Lamb's *Works,* 1818, and in *The Cabinet,* &c., ed. John Aitken, Edinburgh, 1831.

[2] 'I cannot but add here an imitation of this song, with which the author of *The Tale of Rosamund Gray and Blind Margaret* has favoured me, and which appears to me to have caught the happiest manner of our old ballads.' Note prefixed to Lamb's translation. *The Piccolomini* was listed amongst the 'New Publications' in *The Monthly Magazine* of April, 1800. Lamb reprinted his translation with some variations in *John Woodvil,* &c., 1802, under the title *Balad, From the German.*

[*John Woodvil*], viz., *Description of a Forest Life* [II. ii. 204–27]; *The General Lover* [II. ii. 186–97]; and *Fragment or Dialogue* (reprinted as *The Dying Lover, Lond. Mag.*, Jan. 1822).

1801

XVII. *The Albion*, August, 1801: *Epigram* on James Mackintosh, author of *Vindiciae Gallicae.*—'*Though thou'rt like Judas, an apostate black*'.[1]

1802

XVIII. *The Morning Post* (ed. Dan. Stuart), January 4, article: *Grand State Bed;* article: *G. F. Cooke in 'Richard the Third'.*

XIX. *The Morning Post*, January 6, article: *Fable for Twelfth Day;* metrical tale: *Dick Strype. Or, The Force of Habit. A Tale, by Timothy Bramble.*

XX. *The Morning Post*, January 8, *Twelfth Night. Characters That Might Have Been Drawn on the Above Evening.*[2]

XXI. *The Morning Post*, January 9, article: *Theatre. Covent Garden* [G. F. Cooke as King Lear].

XXII. *The Morning Post*, February 1, article: *The Londoner. No. I.*

XXIII. *John Woodvil A Tragedy. By C. Lamb. To which are added, Fragments of Burton, the Author of The Anatomy of Melancholy.* London: Printed by T. Plummer, Seething-Lane; for G. and J. Robinson, Paternoster-Row. 1802. Small 8vo, pp. [iv,] 128. Issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($6\frac{9}{16} \times 4$in.). Pp. 1–104, *John Woodvil;* p. 105, *Balad. From the German;* pp. 106–7, *Helen* [by Mary Lamb]; p. 109 (half-title), *Curious Fragments, etc.;* pp. 111–25, *Curious Fragments, Extracted from a commonplace book, which belonged to Robert Burton, the famous Author of The Anatomy of Melancholy. Extract I; Extract II; Extract III. A Conceipt of Diabolical Possession; Extract IV.*[3]

[1] *The Albion*, a daily paper owned and edited for seven weeks during the summer of 1801 by Lamb's friend, John Fenwick, came to an abrupt end in August, its last remaining patron, Lord Stanhope, having been offended by this epigram on Mackintosh. Lamb contributed sundry paragraphs, &c., to this journal, of which no file is known to exist. He transcribed the epigram in a letter to Manning, August, 1801.

[2] These are six epigrams entitled *Mr. A., Messrs. C. and F., Mr. P—t, Sir Toby Fillpot, Lord Nelson*, and *The City Champion.*

[3] This *Extract* concludes with seven stanzas reprinted by Lamb amongst his poems in the *Works* of 1818, under the title *A Ballad, noting the Difference of Rich and Poor, in the ways of a rich Noble's Palace, and a poor Workhouse.* Here the stanzas are introduced thus: 'THE ARGUMENT. *In a costly Palace Youth meets respect: In a wretched workhouse Age finds neglect.* EVINCED THUS:' and they are followed by 'THE CONSEQUENCE. Wanton Youth is oft times haught and swelling

1803

XXIV. *The Morning Post*, Oct. 8–Dec. 21: *Sundry paragraphs* identified as Lamb's by Mr. Lucas; for which see Editor's Note on *Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago*, I., p. 857.

1804

XXV. *The Morning Post*, February 7. *Epitaph on a Young Lady who Lived Neglected and Died Obscure.*

1806

XXVI. *The King and Queen of Hearts: With the Rogueries of the Knave who stole away the Queen's Pies. Illustrated in Fifteen Elegant Engravings.* London: Printed for Thomas Hodgkins, at the Juvenile Library, Hanway-Street, (opposite Soho-Square) Oxford-Street; and to be had of all Booksellers. 1806. Price 1*s.* Plain or 1*s.* 6*d.* Coloured. Very small 4to ($5\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{15}{16}$in. trimmed), pp. [16] i.e. four signatures (unmarked) of four leaves each, printed on one side only. Leaves 1 and 3 of each sig. are printed on the verso, and leaves 2 and 4 on the recto. The pages are not numbered. P. 1, *The King and Queen of Hearts* [Device] *Showing how notably the Queen made her Tarts, and how scurvily the Knave stole them away. with other particulars belonging thereunto. Printed for Tho*^{s} *Hodgkins, Hanway Street, Nov*^{r} 18, 1805. Pp. 3–16, text. Title and text are engraved on copper. The book is enclosed in a paper cover, on the first page of which is the first title given above, while the fourth page reads: 'At Hodgkins's Juvenile Library, Hanway-Street, (opposite Soho-Square) Oxford-Street. Are Just Published, A Variety of Interesting Little Books, Adorned with Beautiful Copper Plates, for the Use of Children. All of Which May be had of Every Bookseller.'

1807

XXVII. *Tales from Shakespear. Designed for the Use of Young Persons. By Charles Lamb. Embellished with Copper-Plates. In Two Volumes. Vol. I.* [*II.*] London: Printed for Thomas Hodgkins, at the Juvenile Library, Hanway-Street (opposite Soho-Square), Oxford-Street; and to be had of all Booksellers. 1807. 2 vols., 12mo. Vol. I. pp. xii, 236; vol. II. pp. iv, 261. Issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($7\frac{3}{8} \times 4\frac{3}{8}$in.), with label, *Shakespear Tales vol. I.* [*vol. II.*] 8*s.* Of the twenty *Tales* six—*King Lear, Macbeth, Timon of Athens, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet,* and *Othello*—were by Charles, and the remainder

found, When Age for very shame goes stooping to the ground. The Conclusion—*Dura Paupertas!*' The verses here headed *Extract III*, are reprinted in the *Works* of 1818 under the title *Hypochondriacus. John Woodvil* appeared about February 1, 1802.

by Mary Lamb. The work appeared towards the end of January, 1807; a second edition was published in 1809. Eight—perhaps all—of the *Tales* were issued separately, with three plates to each, of a different design from those of the collective edition. These were sold at 6*d.*, the price of the two volume edition being 8*s.* Mr. T. J. Wise possesses copies of four of these sixpenny *Tales—Timon of Athens, Romeo and Juliet, King Lear,* and *The Merchant of Venice.*

XXVIII. *Faulkener: A Tragedy. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. By William Godwin.* London: Printed for Richard Phillips, 6, Bridge-Street, Black-Friars, By Richard Taylor and Co. Shoe Lane. 1807. 8vo (printed in fours), pp. viii, 80 (a stitched pamphlet 8 × 5in.). Pp. [vii], *Prologue. By Mr. Charles Lamb.* The play was produced on December 16, 1807.

XXIX. *Time's a Tell-Tale: A Comedy, In Five Acts, as performed at The Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane.* [Motto from Hom. Il.] By *Henry Siddons.* London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, Paternoster-Row. 1807. 8vo, pp. viii, 70. Issued in blue paper cover, edges untrimmed, 9 × 5¾in. Pp. [69, 70], *Epilogue to Time's a Tell-Tale. Written by C. Lamb, Esq.*

XXX. *The Care-Killer; or, A Happy Knack of Spending an Evening without Company; Being a Valuable Collection of Pleasing Tales, Whimsical Anecdotes, Original Witticisms, Brilliant Flashes, and Good Things. Collected, Selected, and Nothing of Importance Neglected By Jonathan Jolly, Esq. Fellow of the Royal Society of Attic Wits.* London. Sold by J. Coxhead, 420, Strand; J. Goodwin, 14, Brook-Street, Holborn; T. Kaygill, 32, Windmill-Street, Tottenham-Court-Road; and T. Broom, 154, Drury-Lane opposite Long-Acre. Price Sixpence. N.D. Small 12mo, pp. iv, 54 (a stitched pamphlet 5½ × 3¼in.). Pp. 9, 10, *Prologue to Mr. H—, a Farce, performed one Night at Drury-Lane Theatre, but afterwards withdrawn. Mr. H—* was produced Dec. 10, 1806. The play appears to have been first printed at Philadelphia in 1813; text and prologue were printed by Lamb in the *Works* of 1818. The year of *The Care-Killer*, &c., is fixed by the Preface, pp. iii. iv, which is dated 'January 28, 1807'.

1808

XXXI. *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, who lived About the Time of Shakspeare: with Notes. By Charles Lamb.* London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, Paternoster-Row. 1808. 8vo, pp. xii, 484. Issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed (7¾ × 5in.), with label, *Lamb's Specimens of English Dramatic Poets.* Preface and Notes were reprinted with many omissions and variations in the *Works* of 1818.

XXXII. *The Adventures of Ulysses. By Charles Lamb.* London: Printed by T. Davison, Whitefriars, for the Juvenile Library, No. 41, Skinner-Street, Snow-Hill. 1808. 12mo, pp. vi, 204. Issued with engraved title-page in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($7\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{5}{16}$ in.), with label, *Adventures of Ulysses.* The frontispiece bears the date, *Published at Skinner Street June* 6, 1808. There was a second edition in 1819.

1809

XXXIII. *Mrs. Leicester's School: or, The History of Several Young Ladies, Related by Themselves.* London: Printed for M. J. Godwin, at the Juvenile Library, No. 41, Skinner-Street. 1809. 12mo, pp. viii, 180. Issued in pink paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($7\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{8}$in.), with label, *Mrs. Leicester's School.*

Three of the Stories—*Maria Howe: The Witch Aunt* (7th), *Susan Yates: First Going to Church* (9th), and *Arabella Hardy: The Sea Voyage* (10th)—were written by Charles; the seven others by Mary Lamb. There was a second edition in June, 1809, a fourth in 1814, and a ninth in 1825. The first edition appears to have been published late in 1808, though dated 1809. The *Dedication* was reprinted by W. F. Mylius in *The Junior Class-Book; or Reading Lessons for Every Day in the Year*, 1809.[1]

XXXIV. *Poetry for Children, Entirely Original. By the Author of 'Mrs. Leicester's School'. In Two Volumes. Vol. I.* [*II*]. London: Printed for M. J. Godwin, at the Juvenile Library, No. 41, Skinner Street. 1809. 2 vols., small 12mo. Vol. I, pp. iv, 103; vol. II, pp. iv, 104, with frontispiece to each volume. Lamb's share amounted—so he tells Manning, Jan. 2, 1810—to one-third (twenty-eight pieces) of the whole. Only four pieces can be positively identified as his; three—*To a River in which a Child was drowned, The Three Friends,* and *Queen Oriana's Dream*—included in the *Works* of 1818, and one other, *Choosing a Name,* copied out by Robert Lloyd with the signature C. L. *Parental Recollections* and *Love, Death, and Reputation*[2] may also be confidently assigned to him. Six pieces we can identify as Mary's; *Choosing a Profession* and *Breakfast* were transcribed by Robert Lloyd as hers; *David in the Cave of Adullam* was reprinted

[1] In the first edition the list of contents ran as follows:—*The Sailor Uncle; The Farm-house; The Changeling; The Father's Wedding-day; The Young Mahometan; Visit to the Cousins; The Witch Aunt; The Merchant's Daughter; First Time of Going to Church; The Sea Voyage.* In the second and later editions the list appears as given in the Contents of this edition. In the ninth edition (1825), possibly earlier, *The Witch Aunt* was altered to *The Effect of Witch Stories.*

[2] This is a rhymed version of an extract from John Webster's Tragedy, *The Duchess of Malfy,* printed by Lamb in *Specimens,* &c., 1808, p. 218.

as hers in the *Works* of 1818, and *The Two Boys* as by 'a quaint poetess of our day' in *Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading* (*Elia, Last Essays*, 1833). *The First Tooth*—of which Lamb quotes the last line as 'prettily said' in the *Popular Fallacy, That Home is Home*, &c. (*ibid.*)—and *The End of May*—this last on the authority of Talfourd—may be safely given to her. *The Beggar Man* we know, on Lamb's authority, to have been written by his brother John. The book probably appeared towards the end of June, 1809. No second edition was published by Godwin, but many of the poems were reprinted in other books issued by him (see next three articles). From 1827 to 1877—See Title-note (II. p. 419) to *Poetry for Children*—the book disappeared; in the latter year a copy reached England from Adelaide and was immediately reprinted by R. H. Shepherd (Chatto and Windus, 1877). In 1812 an American edition was published at Boston by West and Richardson. This included only eighty-one of the eighty-four poems of the original book, 'Clock Striking', 'Why not do it, Sir, to-day?' and 'Home Delights' (Nos. 70, 71, 72) being omitted.[1]

XXXV. *The Junior Class-Book; or, Reading Lessons for Every Day in the Year: Selected by W. F. Mylius.* London: M. J. Godwin & Co. 1809. This contains 'To a River in which a Child was Drowned', and 'The Coffee Slips', from *Poetry for Children.*

1810

XXXVI. *The Poetical Class-Book; or, Reading Lessons for Every Day in the Year: Selected from the most popular English Poets, Ancient and Modern. By W. F. Mylius.* London: M. J. Godwin & Co. 1810 (published in October). This contains 'Breakfast', 'The Coffee Slips', and 'David in the Cave of Adullam', from *Poetry for Children.*

1811

XXXVII. *The First Book of Poetry. For the Use of Schools. Intended as Reading Lessons for the Younger Classes. By W. F. Mylius. With Two Engravings.* London: Printed for M. J.

[1] *Poetry for Children* (1809) was issued in paper-covered boards (trimmed edges, $5\frac{3}{8} \times 3\frac{3}{8}$ in.), with leather backs lettered lengthwise *Leicester's Poetry.* The plate in vol. i has 'Frontispiece, vol. i' above, and 'Keep your own side, do, Grey Pate! p. 29.' below; that in vol. ii has 'Frontispiece. Vol. ii.' above, and '———He fear'd the little bird, That singing in the air he heard, Was telling his transgression, p. 7' below. On the verso of title-page in each volume appears the imprint, 'Mercier and Shervet, Printers, No. 32, Little Bartholomew Close, London'. In both volumes the imprint reappears on last page, with 'Chervet' for *Shervet.* For a list of the contents (eighty-four pieces) see the contents-table of this edition under *Poetry for Children*, 1809.

Godwin, at the Juvenile Library, 41, Skinner Street, Snow Hill; and to be had of all Booksellers. 1811 [published Nov. 1810]. Price 3*s.* bound in Sheep. 12mo ($6\frac{11}{16}$ × 4in.), pp. xii, 176, with frontispiece, and plate facing p. 47. This contains the twenty-four following pieces from *Poetry for Children:* Envy, The Reaper's Child, The Ride, The Peach, The Rook and the Sparrows, The Boy and the Snake, The First Tooth, Cleanliness, Going into Breeches, Nursing, Feigned Courage, The Broken Doll, Written in the First Leaf of a Child's Memorandum-Book, Memory, On the Lord's Prayer, The Magpye's Nest, The Boy and the Sky-Lark, Which is the Favourite ? The Beggar-man, The Sister's Expostulation on the Brother's Learning Latin, The Brother's Reply, The Beasts in the Tower, The Rainbow, Time Spent in Dress.[1] The Ride is here entitled The First Sight of Green Fields. In later editions The Reaper's Child and Which is the Favourite ? are omitted.

In 1872 R. H. Shepherd collected the pieces reprinted in this and the two preceding volumes (omitting The Reaper's Child and Which is the Favourite ?), and published them with certain other poems by Charles and Mary, under the title, *Poetry for Children by Charles and Mary Lamb* (B. M. Pickering). Five years later (see Article XXXIV above) he recovered and reprinted a copy of the authentic *Poetry for Children.* In reprinting the Lambs' verses Mylius had occasionally altered or mutilated the text.

XXXVIII. *Prince Dorus: or, Flattery put out of Countenance, A Poetical Version of an Ancient Tale. Illustrated with a Series of Elegant Engravings.* London: Printed for M. J. Godwin, at the Juvenile Library, No. 41, Skinner Street; and to be had of all Booksellers and Toymen in the United Kingdom. 1811. 16mo (5 × $4\frac{1}{4}$in.), pp. 31. There are nine plates, inserted opposite title and pp. 6, 7, 10, 19, 21, 23, 29, and 31. The book was enclosed in a paper cover with a cut of the Prince and the old Fairy on the first page, the fourth being blank. In some copies the cut appears on the fourth page of the cover, while the first page has the legend of the title-page within a key border, and the words, *Price* 2*s.* 6*d. Coloured or* 1*s.* 6*d. Plain.* inserted above 'London: Printed', &c. This poem is authenticated by an entry in Crabb Robinson's Diary dated May 15, 1811. In his MS. Reminiscences Robinson (see Lucas, *Works of C. & M.*

[1] In addition to these twenty-four pieces from the *Poetry for Children*, there is a poem entitled *A Birth-day Thought* signed 'M. L.' on pp. 19, 20. In the edition of 1817 this signature is altered to 'C. L.' The plates in this volume are the same as those in *Poetry for Children*, the page-references being altered, the word *Frontispiece* omitted from the second plate, and the words, *Published by M. J. Godwin, No.* 41 *Skinner Street, November* 1*st*, 1810. added at the foot of each.

L., III, p. 498) says, under the year 1811: 'C. Lamb wrote this year for children a version of the Nursery Tale of Prince Dorus. I mention this, because it is not in his collected works and like the two vols. of Poems for Children likely to be lost.' This note must have been written later than 1818. In 1877 R. H. Shepherd reprinted *Prince Dorus* along with the recently recovered *Poetry for Children* (Chatto and Windus), from a copy lent him by Mr. J. C. Macgregor of Kilbride, Dunoon, Argyleshire.

XXXIX. [*Beauty and the Beast or A Rough Outside with Gentle Heart A Poetical Version of an Ancient Tale Illustrated with a Series of Elegant Engravings And Beauty's Song at Her Spinning Wheel Set to Music by Mr. Whitaker* London Printed for M. J. Godwin, at the Juvenile Library, 41, Skinner Street And to be had of all Booksellers and Toymen throughout the United Kingdom. Price 5*s.* 6*d.* Coloured, or 3*s.* 6*d.* Plain. 16mo ($5\frac{1}{8} \times 4\frac{1}{4}$in. trimmed), pp. ii, 32.

There are eight plates, facing title-page and pp. 4, 11, 16, 19, 21, 28, and 29, with a folded sheet (pp. 1, 2) of engraved music, p. 1 headed *Beauty's Song. Composed by Mr. Whitaker*, p. 2 headed *Second Verse.* The book was bound in gray boards (roan back) with a cut and inscription, *Go, be a Beast! Homer.* on the front cover, the back cover being blank. In some copies the cut is on the back cover and the front bears a legend identical with the title-page (but with date '1813') within a border of rosettes. There were several editions within a few years, and the type was reset at least once.

Beauty and The Beast was first ascribed to Lamb by Mr. Pearson, in a communication to *The Athenæum* of July 4, 1885. In 1886 R. H. Shepherd reprinted the story (Redway), and in the following year Mr. Andrew Lang edited it for Andrew Tuer. Mr. Lucas does not believe it to be Lamb's. In R. H. Shepherd's reprint a title is quoted with the date 1811 'from a list of M. J. Godwin's publications at the end of the little volume,' i.e. Mr. Pearson's copy of the original edition. Pp. 3 and 4 are watermarked 1810.]

XL. *The Reflector, a quarterly Magazine, on subjects of Philosophy, Politics, and the Liberal Arts. Conducted by the Editor of The Examiner* [Leigh Hunt]. Vol. I (Nos. I, II), II (Nos. III, IV). [Oct., 1810—Dec., 1811.] Vol. I., No. II (Jan.–March, 1811), Art. xii: *On the Inconveniences Resulting from Being Hanged;* Art. xv: *On the Danger of Confounding Moral with Personal Deformity;* Art. xvi: *On the Probable Effects of the Gunpowder Treason;* Art. xxi: *On the Ambiguities Arising from Proper Names.*

Vol. II., No. III (April—Sept., 1811), Art. viii: *On the Genius of Hogarth;* Art. xi: *On the Custom of Hissing at Theatres;* Art. xiii: *On Burial Societies.*

Vol. II., No. IV (Oct.—Dec., 1811), Art. ix: *Theatralia. No. I.—On Garrick, and Acting;* Art. xiii: *Specimens from Fuller;* Art. xiii: *A Bachelor's Complaint of the Behaviour of Married People;* Art. xviii: *A Farewell to Tobacco;* Art. xix: *Edax on Appetite;* Art. xix: *Hospita on the Indulgence of the Palate;* Art. xxiii: *The Good Clerk.*

XLI. *The Gentleman's Magazine,* November, 1811: *Obituary Memoir of Robert Lloyd.*

1812

XLII. *The Examiner,* March 15, 1812: *The Triumph of the Whale:* unsigned.

XLIII. *The Examiner,* March 22, 1812: Two Epigrams, '*Princeps his rent*' and '*Ye Politicians*': unsigned.

1813

XLIV. *Remorse. A Tragedy, In Five Acts. By S. T. Coleridge.* [Motto from Act I, Scene i.] London: Printed for W. Pople, 67, Chancery-Lane. 1813. Price Three Shillings. 8vo, pp. xii, 72. Issued as a stitched pamphlet without cover, $9 \times 5\frac{5}{8}$ in. untrimmed. 'Prologue, By C. Lamb. Spoken by Mr. Carr,' pp. ix. x.

XLV. *The Philanthropist: or Repository for Hints and Suggestions calculated to promote the Comfort and Happiness of Man* [ed. Wm. Allen and Jas. Mill], vol. III, No. IX, pp. 48–54, Jan., 1813: *The Confessions of a Drunkard: To the Editor of The Philanthropist.* No sig.

XLVI. *The Gentleman's Magazine,* vol. LXXXIII, pp. 532–4; 617–22 (June, 1813 and *Supplement*): *On Christ's Hospital, and the Character of the Christ's Hospital Boys:* unsigned.

XLVII. *The Examiner* [ed. Leigh Hunt]: *Table Talk: Reynolds and Leonardo da Vinci,* June 6; [*Modern Acting and Stage Manners,*] July 18; *Books with One Idea in Them,* July 18; *A Sylvan Surprise,* Sept. 12; [*Flying Words,*] Sept. 12; [*A Town Residence,*] Sept. 12; *Gray's Bard,* Sept. 12; *An American War for Helen,* Sept. 26; [*Dryden and Collier,*] Sept. 26; *Play-house Memoranda,* Dec. 19. The titles in brackets are recent and editorial merely; the others appear over their respective notes when reprinted in *The Indicator,* 1820–1. The notes are signed ‡.

XLVIII. *Mr. H. or Beware a Bad Name. A Farce in Two Acts: as performed at the Philadelphia Theatre.* Philadelphia: Published by M. Carey, 122 Market Street. A. Fagan, Printer. 1813. Small 12mo, pp. 36. Issued probably as a stitched pamphlet, without cover. A second edition appeared in 1825 with same title, and imprint on title-page, 'Philadelphia: Published by

Thomas H. Palmer. 1825.' Neither edition has the Prologue (see under years 1807, 1818).

1814

XLIX. *The Quarterly Review* [ed. W. Gifford], October, 1814: Review, *Wordsworth's 'Excursion':* unsigned.

L. *The Champion* [ed. John Scott], Dec. 4, 1814: *On the Melancholy of Tailors.* Signed *Burton Junior.*

LI. *Debtor and Creditor: A Comedy, in Five Acts, as performed at The Theatre Royal, Covent Garden. By James Kenney Esq.,* London: Printed for John Miller, 25 Bow Street, Covent Garden. 1814. Price Three Shillings. 8vo (printed in fours), pp. iv, 98. Issued apparently as a stitched pamphlet, $8\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ in. trimmed. '*Epilogue.* By C. Lamb. Spoken by Mr. Liston & Mr. Emery in character,' pp. 96–8.

1815

LII. *The Examiner,* January 1, 1815: Lines, *To T. L. H.*

LIII. *The British Lady's Magazine and Monthly Miscellany,* April 1, 1815: *On Needle-Work* [by Mary Lamb]: signed *Sempronia.*

1818

LIV. *The Works of Charles Lamb. In Two Volumes.* Vol. I [II] London: Printed for C. and J. Ollier, Vere-Street, Bond-Street. Small 8vo, vol. I, pp. xii, 292; vol. II, pp. viii, 260. Issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($6\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{3}{16}$in.), with label, *Works of C. Lamb.* Vol. I [II] 12s. *Dedication to S. T. Coleridge Esq.,* pp. v–ix; *Poems,* pp. 1–54: *Hester;* To Charles Lloyd, an unexpected Visitor; The Three Friends; To a River in which a Child was Drowned; The Old Familiar Faces; Helen [*M. L.*]; A Vision of Repentance; *Dialogue between a Mother and Child* [*M. L.*]; Queen Oriana's Dream; A Ballad, noting the Difference of Rich and Poor, &c.; Hypochondriacus; A Farewell to Tobacco; To T. L. H., a Child; Ballad, from the German; David in the Cave of Adullam [*M. L.*]; *Salome* [*M. L.*]; *Lines suggested by a Picture of Two Females by Lionardo da Vinci* [*M. L.*]; *Lines, on the same Picture being removed to make place for a Portrait of a Lady by Titian* [*M. L.*]; *Lines, on the celebrated Picture by Lionardo Da Vinci, called the Virgin of the Rocks* [*M. L.*]; *On the same* [*M. L.*].

Sonnets, pp. 55–68: I. *To Miss Kelly:* II. *On the Sight of Swans in Kensington Gardens;* III. 'Was it some sweet device'; IV. 'Methinks how dainty sweet'; V. 'When last I roved'; VI. 'A timid grace'; VII. 'If from my lips'; VIII. *The Family Name;* IX. *To John Lamb Esq. of the South-Sea House;* X. 'O! I could laugh'; XI. 'We were two pretty babes.'

Blank Verse, pp. 69–78: Childhood; The Grandame; The Sabbath Bells; Fancy employed on Divine Subjects; Composed at Midnight.

John Woodvil, a Tragedy, pp. 79–164.

The Witch, a Dramatic Sketch of the Seventeenth Century, pp. 165–70.

Curious Fragments from a common-place-book of Robert Burton, pp. 171–86.

Rosamund Gray, a Tale, pp. 187–264.

Recollections of Christ's Hospital, pp. 265–92.

Vol. II, Dedicatory Sonnet: *To Martin Charles Burney, Esq*, p. viii.

Essays, pp. 1–136: On the Tragedies of Shakspeare; Characters of Dramatic Writers contemporary with Shakspeare; Specimens from the Writings of Fuller; On the Character and Genius of Hogarth; *On the Poetical Works of George Wither*.

Letters under assumed Signatures, pp. 137–212: The Londoner; On Burial Societies; On the Danger of confounding Moral with Personal Deformity; On the Inconveniences resulting from being Hanged; On the Melancholy of Tailors; Hospita on the immoderate Indulgence of the Pleasures of the Palate; Edax on Appetite.

Mr. H——, a Farce, in Two Acts, pp. 213–60. [Though *Mr. H——* was published at Philadelphia, U.S., in 1813, it was not printed by the author till 1818.]

LV. *The Examiner*, Nov. 22, 1818: *Mrs. Gould* (*Miss Burrell*) *in* '*Don Giovanni in London*': signed †.

1819

LVI. *The Examiner: Miss Kelly at Bath* (reprinted from *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, Jan. 30), Feb. 7, 8; *Valentine's Day*, Feb. 14, 15; *Sonnet* [*Work*], June 20, 21; *Richard Brome's* '*Jovial Crew*,' July 4, 5; *Bickerstaff's* '*Hypocrite*', Aug. 1, 2; *New Pieces at the Lyceum*, Aug. 8, 9; Sonnet: *Written at Cambridge*, Aug. 29, 30; '*Falstaff's Letters*,' Sept. 5, 6; Sonnet: *St. Crispin to Mr. Gifford*, Oct. 3, 4; '*Nugae Canorae*,' Oct. 24, 25; *On the Acting of Munden, Nov.* 7, 8; Sonnet: *To a Celebrated Female Performer in* '*The Blind Boy*' (reprinted from *The Morning Chronicle*, Nov. 10), Nov. 14, 15. The prose pieces above named are signed * * * *, except *Valentine's Day*, which is signed * * *.

1820

LVII. *The Examiner*, January 16, 17: '*First Fruits of Australian Poetry*' [Review of Barron Field's Poems]: signed * * * *.

LVIII. *The Champion* [ed. John Thelwall]: Verses: *The Godlike*, March 18, 19; *In Tabulam Eximii Pictoris, B. Haydoni* (signed *Carlagnulus*), and *Translation of the Latin Verses on Mr. Haydon's*

Picture, May 6, 7 ; *The Three Graves* (signed *Dante*), May 13, 14 ; *Sonnet to Matthew Wood Esq.*, May 13, 14 ; Epigram : *On a Projected Journey*, July 15, 16 ; Epigram : *On a Late Empiric of 'Balmy' Memory*, July 15, 16 ; *Song for the C[oronatio]n*, July 15, 16 ; Verses : *The Unbeloved*, Sept. 23, 24 ; [*A Lady's Sapphic*, Nov. 4, 5.[1] *Danae Exposed with her Infant : An English Sapphic ;* signed *C.*, Nov. 5.]

LIX. *The Morning Chronicle*, July 13 : *Sonnet to Miss Burney, on her Character of Blanch in 'Country Neighbours,' a Tale.*

LX. *The New Times* [ed. Dr. John Stoddart], July 19 : *Keats'* '*Lamia.*'

LXI. *The Indicator* [ed. Leigh Hunt] : *Epitaph on a Dog* (trans. from Vincent Bourne), May 3 ; *A True Story* (signed △), July 12 ; Sonnet : *To my Friend the Indicator*, Sept. 27 ; Gray's 'Bard,' Books with One Idea, Play-house Memoranda, Dec. 13 ; *On the Talking of Nonsense*, Dec. 13 ; *Sir Thomas More*, Dec. 20 ; signed * * * *.

LXII. *The London Magazine* [ed. John Scott] : *Recollections of the South Sea House*, August ; Sonnet : *To the Author of Poems Published under the Name of Barry Cornwall*, Sept. ; *To R.* [? *J.*] *S. Knowles, Esq.*, Sept. ; *The Ape*, Oct. ; *Oxford in the Vacation*, Oct. ; *Christ's Hospital Five and Thirty Years Ago*, Nov. ; *The Two Races of Men*, December. With a few exceptions, Lamb's prose contributions to the *L. M.* were signed *Elia.*

LXIII. *A Brief History of Christ's Hospital, from its Foundation by King Edward the Sixth, to the Present Time. With a List of the Governors.* [Woodcut of a Christ's Hospital Boy.] London : Printed by and for Messrs. Nichols and Son, 25, Parliament Street ; and sold also by the Author, 28, Shoemakers Row, Doctor's Commons. 1820. 12mo, pp. vi, 92.

Pp. 43–70 : On Christ's Hospital and the Character of the Christ's Hospital Boys. By Mr. Charles Lambe, (a reprint of Lamb's two articles in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1813. The book was by John Iliffe Wilson.)

1821

LXIV. *The Indicator :* A Sylvan Surprise, An American War for Helen, [*Holiday Children* ; signed *An Old Boy*], Jan. 3 ; Valentine's Day, Feb. 14 ; [*Old Maids*, signed *An Old Maid ; Mrs. B.*, signed *F. N.*, Feb. 21].

LXV. *The London Magazine : New Year's Eve*, Jan. ; *Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist*, Feb. ; *A Chapter on Ears*, March ; *All Fools'*

[1] Signed *M. S.* on Sat., Nov. 4 ; signature altered to *M. L.* on Sunday, Nov. 5. *M. L.* appears in *The Poetical Recreations of the Champion*, &c. ; see below, Art. lxvii.

Day, April; *Sonnet by Charles Lamb*, April; *The Confessions of H. F. V. H. Delamore, Esq.*, April; *A Quaker's Meeting*, April; *The Old and the New Schoolmaster*, May; *My Relations*, June; *Mackery End, in Hertfordshire*, July; [ed. John Taylor and Thomas Hood] *Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen, and other Imperfect Sympathies*, August; *The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple*, September; *Witches, and other Night Fears*, October; *Grace before Meat*, November; *My First Play*, December.

1822

LXVI. *The London Magazine: Dream Children: A Reverie*, January; *A Dramatic Fragment* (signed * * *), January; *On some of the Old Actors*, February; *Distant Correspondents*, March; *The Old Actors*, April; *The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers: A May-Day Effusion*, May; *A Complaint of the Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis*, June; *Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading*, July; *Reprints of Elia;* Confessions of a Drunkard, August; *A Dissertation on Roast Pig*, September; A Bachelor's Complaint of the Behaviour of Married People, September; *The Old Actors: Mr. Suett; Mr. Munden*, October; *Modern Gallantry*, November; *The Gentle Giantess*, December; *The Miscellany: Scraps of Criticism* (unsigned), December.

LXVII. *The Poetical Recreations of The Champion, and his Literary Correspondents, with a Selection of Essays, Literary and Critical, which have appeared in The Champion Newspaper.* With some few minds congenial let me stray Along the Muses' haunts. London: Printed at The Champion Press, 271, Strand, by and for John Thelwall; and sold by Sir R. Phillips, Bridge-Street; Ridgeway, Piccadilly, &c. 1822. 8vo, pp. viii, 248. Issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($7\frac{7}{8} \times 5\frac{1}{8}$ in.), with label printed length-wise, *The Poetical Recreations of The Champion. Price* 10*s.* 6*d.*

A Lady's Sapphic (signed *M. L.*); In Tabulam Eximii, &c. (signed *Carlagnulus*); Translation (of the foregoing, signed *C. L.*); and the ten following, signed R. ET R.:—Song for the C[oronatio]n; Sonnet to Matthew Wood, Esq.; The Godlike; On a Projected Journey; On a late Empiric of 'Balmy' Memory; The Unbeloved; Epigram ('Ye Politicians, tell me, pray'); The Triumph of the Whale; Sonnet: St. Crispin to Mr. Gifford; The Three Graves—this last signed DANTE. (R. ET R.)

1823

LXVIII. *The London Magazine: Rejoicings on the New Year's Coming of Age* (signed *Elia's Ghost*), January; *A Character of the late Elia* (signed *By a Friend*), January; *The Miscellany; The Choice of a Grave; Wilks*, January; *The Miscellany:*

Milton ; A Check to Human Pride, February ; *Old China,* March ; *Ritson* versus *John Scott the Quaker,* April ; *Poor Relations,* May ; *The Child Angel : A Dream,* June ; *The Old Margate Hoy,* July ; *Nugae Criticae. By the Author of 'Elia' : No. I. Defence of the Sonnets of Sir Philip Sydney* (signed *L.*), September ; *Letter of Elia to Robert Southey, Esq.,* October ; Guy Faux (partly reprinted from *The Reflector,* No. II, Art. xvi), November ; *Nugae Criticae. By the Author of 'Elia' : No. II. On a Passage in 'The Tempest,'* signed *L.*, Nov. ; *Amicus Redivivus,* Dec.

LXIX. *Elia. Essays which have appeared under that Signature in The London Magazine.* London : Printed for Taylor and Hessey, Fleet-Street. 1823. [Shortly after publication the title-page was reprinted, 'Fleet-Street' being replaced with '33 Fleet Street, And 13 Waterloo Place'.] 8vo, pp. iv, 341. Issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($7\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ in.), with label, *Elia.* —9*s.* 6*d.*

Contents : The South-Sea House ; Oxford in the Vacation ; Christ's Hospital Five-and-Thirty Years Ago ; The Two Races of Men ; New Year's Eve ; Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist ; A Chapter on Ears ; All Fools' Day ; A Quaker's Meeting ; The Old and the New Schoolmaster ; Valentine's Day ; Imperfect Sympathies ; Witches and other Night Fears ; My Relations ; Mackery End, in Hertfordshire ; Modern Gallantry ; The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple ; Grace before Meat ; My First Play ; Dream Children : A Reverie ; Distant Correspondents ; The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers ; A Complaint of the Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis ; A Dissertation upon Roast Pig ; A Bachelor's Complaint of the Behaviour of Married People ; On Some of the Old Actors ; On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century ; On the Acting of Munden.

With the exception of *Valentine's Day,* which had appeared in *The Examiner* (Feb. 14, 1819) and *The Indicator* (Feb. 14, 1821), these twenty-eight essays were reprinted from *The London Magazine* of 1820–2. The last three were rearranged from three articles printed in Feb., April and Oct., 1822, entitled *On Some of the Old Actors, The Old Actors,* and *The Old Actors : Mr. Suett ; Mr. Munden* respectively.

1824

LXX. *The London Magazine : Blakesmoor in H—shire,* September ; *Captain Jackson,* November.

1825

LXXI. *The London Magazine : A Letter to an Old Gentleman whose Education has been Neglected,* January ; *A Biographical Memoir of Mr. Liston* (unsigned), January ; *A vision of Horns,* January ; *Unitarian Protests,* February ; *Autobiography of Mr. Munden*

(signed *Joseph Munden*), February; *Reflections in the Pillory*, March; *Barbara S—*, April; *The Last Peach* (signed *Suspensurus*), April; *Quatrains to the Editor of the Everyday Book* (signed *C. Lamb*), May; The Three Graves (unsigned), May; *The Superannuated Man*, May; *The Wedding*, June; *The Convalescent*, July; *Imperfect Dramatic Illusion*, August.

LXXII. *The New Monthly Magazine* (Henry Colburn): *The Illustrious Defunct*, January.

LXXIII. *The New Times* (ed. John Stoddart): *Many Friends* (No. X of a series entitled *Variorum*): signed *Lepus*, Jan. 8; *Readers against the Grain:* signed *Lepus*, Jan. 13; Review: *Comic Tales, Etc., by C. Dibdin the Younger*, Jan. 27; *Mortifications of an Author:* signed *Lepus*, Jan. 31; *Tom Pry:* signed *Lepus*, Feb. 8; *Tom Pry's Wife:* signed *Lepus*, Feb. 28; Review: *Odes and Addresses to Great People*, April 12; *A Character:* signed *Lepus*, Aug. 25; *Pindaric Ode to the Tread Mill*, Oct. 24; Epigram: *The Poetical Cask* (*On the Arrival in England of Lord Byron's Remains*), Oct. 24.

LXXIV. *The Every-Day Book* (ed. William Hone): *Remarkable Correspondent*, May 1; Quatrains to the Editor of the Every-Day Book, July 9; *Dog Days*, July 14; *Captain Starkey*, July 21; *Twelfth of August*, August 12; *The Ass*, October 5; *In Re Squirrels*, October 17. The contributions to *The Every-Day Book* are mostly signed *C. L.*

1826

LXXV. *The New Monthly Magazine: Popular Fallacies*, I.—*That a Bully is always a Coward;* II.—*That Ill-gotten Gain never Prospers;* III.—*That a Man must not Laugh at His own Jest;* IV.—*That Such a one Shows His Breeding*, &c.; V.—*That the Poor Copy the Vices of the Rich;* VI.—*That Enough is as Good as a Feast;* VII.—*Of Two Disputants, the Warmest is Generally in the Wrong;* VIII.—*That Verbal Allusions are not Wit*, &c.; IX.—*That the Worst Puns are the Best*, January; *The Progress of Cant*, February; *Popular Fallacies:* X.—*That you must Love Me, and Love My Dog;* XI.—*That We should Rise with the Lark;* XII.—*That We should Lie down with the Lamb*, February; *Popular Fallacies:* XIII.—*That Handsome is that Handsome Does;* XIV.—*That my Lord Shaftesbury and Sir William Temple are models of the Genteel Style in Writing*; XV.—*That Home is Home, Though it is Never so Homely*, March; *Popular Fallacies:* XVI.—*That we must not look a Gift-Horse in the Mouth*, April; *The Religion of Actors*, April; *Popular Fallacies:* XVII.—*That Great Wit is allied to Madness* ('Sanity of True Genius'), May; *Popular Fallacies:* XVIII.—*That a Deformed Person is a Lord*, June; *The Reminiscences of Juke Judkins, Esq.*, June; *Popular Fallacies:* XIX.—*That a Sulky Temper is a Misfortune*, September.

LXXVI. *The Every-Day Book: An Appearance of the Season*, Jan. 28; *The Months*, April 16; *Reminiscence of Sir Jeffery Dunstan*, June 22.

1827

LXXVII. *The Table Book* (William Hone): *Letter to the Editor*, Jan. 27; *Extracts from the Garrick Plays*, Jan.–Dec.; *A Death Bed* (signed *L.*), Feb. 10; *Maid Marian: Letters to the Editor*, May 17, 24; *Gone or Going*; *Sonnet to Miss Kelly on her excellent Performance of Blindness*, &c., July; *Miss Kelly: Letter to the Editor*, July; *Mrs.Gilpin riding to Edmonton*, July 16; *The Defeat of Time, August.*

LXXVIII. *The New Monthly Magazine: Angel Help*, June.

1828

LXXIX. *The Spectator: Shakspeare's Improvers: Letter to the Editor*, November 22.

LXXX. *The Bijou; or Annual of Literature and the Arts.* [Design by Stothard—Cupid] London: William Pickering. Chancery Lane. 1828. Small 8vo, pp. xiv, 320. Issued in printed boards, with leather back, and gilt edges ($6\frac{5}{16} \times 4$in.), with label, *The Bijou, Pickering.* MDCCCXXVIII. There were 10 plates printed separately. '*Verses for an Album* ["Fresh clad", &c.]. By Charles Lamb, Esq.' pp. 24–5.

LXXXI. *Elia. Essays which have appeared under that signature in the London Magazine.* Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, and Carey—Chesnut Street. Mifflin and Parry, Printers. 1828. Small 12mo, pp. 292. [An American pirated reprint of Elia, 1823.]

LXXXII. *Elia. Essays which have appeared under that signature in the London Magazine. Second Series.* Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, and Carey—Chestnut Street. J. R. A. Skerrett, Printer. 1828. Small 12mo, pp. 230. Issued in yellow paper-covered boards, pink muslin back, edges untrimmed ($7\frac{1}{8} \times 4$in.), with label *Elia.—Second Series.* [An American pirated reprint.]

Contents: Rejoicings upon the New Year's coming of Age; Reflections in the Pillory; *Twelfth Night, or What You Will* [by Bryan Waller Procter (Barry Cornwall)]; The Old Margate Hoy; A Vision of Horns; On the Danger of Confounding Moral with Personal Deformity [*Works*, 1818]; On the Melancholy of Tailors [*ibid.*]; *The Nuns and Ale of Caverswell* [by Allan Cunningham]; *Valentine's Day* [by Bryan Waller Procter]; On the Inconveniences resulting from being Hanged [*Works*, 1818]; Letter to an Old Gentleman whose Education has been Neglected; Old China; On Burial Societies; and the Character of an Undertaker [*Works*, 1818]; Barbara S——; Guy Faux; Poor Relations; The Child Angel; A Dream; Amicus Redivivus; Blakesmoor

in H—shire; Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading; Captain Jackson; Confessions of a Drunkard; The Old Actors; The Gentle Giantess; A Character of the Late Elia.

LXXXIII. *Blackwood's Magazine: The Wife's Trial; or, The Intruding Widow: A Dramatic Poem,* December.

1829

LXXXIV. *Blackwood's Magazine: The Gipsy's Malison,* January; *The Christening; For a Young Lady's Album,* May; *For the Album of Miss——, a French Teacher,* June; *To Emma, Learning Latin and Desponding* (M. L.), June.

LXXXV. *The Gem, A Literary Annual, Edited by Thomas Hood, Esq.* [Motto:] 'Buds and Flowers begin the Year, Song and Tale bring up the rear'. London: W. Marshall, 1, Holborn Bars. 1829. 12mo, pp. 342, with 16 plates printed separately. Issued in red watered silk, gilt edges ($6\frac{3}{16} \times 3\frac{15}{16}$in.), with back lettered *The Gem. London.* 1829. *On an Infant Dying as Soon as Born* (signed C. Lamb), pp. 18, 19.

1830

LXXXVI. *Blackwood's Magazine: The Pawnbroker's Daughter: A Farce,* January.

LXXXVII. *The Gem, A Literary Annual.* [Motto:] 'Buds and Flowers begin the Year, Song and Tale bring up the rear'. London: W. Marshall, 1, Holborn Bars; And T. Wardle, Philadelphia. MDCCCXXX. 12mo, pp. xii, 275, with engraved title and twelve plates. Issued in red watered silk, gilt edges ($6\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{8}$in.), with back lettered *The Gem. London. Saturday Night* (sketch explanatory of an engraving by J. Mitchell from D. Wilkie's picture; signed *Nepos*).

LXXXVIII. *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel De Foe: containing a Review of his Writings, and his Opinions upon a Variety of Important Matters, Civil and Ecclesiastical. By Walter Wilson, Esq. Of the Inner Temple.* In Three Volumes. Vol. I. [II. III.] London: Hurst, Chance, and Co. 1830. 8vo, issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($9 \times 5\frac{1}{2}$in.), with labels. Vol. III, pp. xx, 685. *Original Remarks upon De Foe's Genius,* pp. 428–9; *Estimate of De Foe's Secondary Novels,* pp. 636–9.

LXXXIX. *Album Verses, With a Few Others, By Charles Lamb.* [Vignette: Nude Figure of a Boy seated on a pedestal, holding tablet and style.] London: Edward Moxon, 64, New Bond Street. 1830. 8vo, pp. viii, 150. Issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($7 \times 4\frac{3}{4}$in.), with paper label, *Album Verses. By C. Lamb. Price* 7*s.* Published at the close of June, 1830.

Contents:—Dedication, *To the Publisher; Album Verses: In*

the Album of a Clergyman's Lady ; In the Autograph-Book of Mrs. Sergeant W—— ; In the Album of Lucy Barton ; In the Album of Miss—— ; *In the Album of a very young Lady ;* In the Album of a French Teacher ; *In the Album of Miss Daubeny ; In the Album of Mrs. Jane Towers ;* In my own Album.

Miscellaneous : Angel Help ; The Christening ; On an Infant Dying as soon as Born ; *To Bernard Barton ; The Young Catechist ; She is going ; To a Young Friend ; To the Same.*

Sonnets : Harmony in Unlikeness ; Written at Cambridge ; To a Celebrated Female Performer in the 'Blind Boy' ; Work ; Leisure ; *To Samuel Rogers, Esq.* ; The Gipsy's Malison.

Commendatory Verses : To the Author of Poems Published under the Name of Barry Cornwall ; To R. [? J.] S. Knowles, Esq., on his Tragedy of Virginius ; To the Editor of the 'Every-Day Book'.

Acrostics : To Caroline Maria Applebee ; To Cecilia Catherine Lawton ; To a Lady who desired me to write her Epitaph ; Another, to her Youngest Daughter.

Translations from the Latin of Vincent Bourne : On a Sepulchral Statue of an Infant Sleeping ; The Rival Bells ; Epitaph on a Dog ; *The Ballad Singers ; To David Cook ; On a Deaf and Dumb Artist ; Newton's Principia ; The House-Keeper ; The Female Orators.*

Pindaric Ode to the Tread Mill ; Epicedium : Going or Gone. The Wife's Trial ; or, The Intruding Widow : A Dramatic Poem.

XC. *The Spectator : Clarence Songs : To the Editor of The Spectator,* (two letters signed *C. L.*), July 24.

XCI. *The Examiner : On the 'Literary Gazette'* (Epigram, signed T. A.), Aug. 22.

1831

XCII. *The Year Book* (W. Hone) : Verses, *To C. Aders, Esq.*, March 19 ; *The Change* (reprinted with title, *To Louisa M——, whom I used to call 'Monkey'*, in *The Poetical Works of Charles Lamb*, Moxon, 1836), December 30.

XCIII. *The Englishman's Magazine* (Edward Moxon) : *Reminiscences of Elliston*, August ; *Hercules Pacificatus*, August ; *Peter's Net : No. I.—Recollections of a late Royal Academician*, September ; *The Latin Poems of Vincent Bourne*, September ; *Suggested by a Sight of Waltham Cross*, Sept. ; *Peter's Net : No. II.—On the Total Defect of the faculty of Imagination observable in the works of modern British Artists* (reprinted with title, *Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago*, in *Elia : Last Essays*, 1833), October.

XCIV. *The Athenæum* (ed. Charles Wentworth Dilke) : Epi-

grams, (1) *On Miss F. A—T—N, of the K. T.;* (2) 'John's wife complains', August 6; *Lines for a Monument,* November 5.

XCV. *Satan in Search of a Wife; with the Whole Process of his Courtship and Marriage, and who Danced at the Wedding, By an Eye Witness.* [Vignette.—Satan's Dam, with two attendant sprites, dancing.] London: Edward Moxon, 64, New Bond Street. M.DCCC.XXXI. 12mo, pp. 36, with four separate woodcut plates, facing title-page and pp. 8, 21, 22; also vignette on p. 36.

Issued in pink paper covers, the legend on first page being the same as that of title-page with the words, *Price One Shilling,* added above the date, and the imprint, *Bradbury and Evans, Bouverie Street,* below a double-rule border enclosing the legend.

1832

XCVI. *The Athenæum: The Self-Enchanted,* Jan. 7; *Munden the Comedian* (reprinted in 1833 as *The Death of Munden*), February 11; *The Parting Speech of the Celestial Messenger to the Poet,* February 25; *Existence, Considered in Itself, no Blessing,* July 7.

XCVII. *The Reflector* (ed. John Forster): *An Essay on Painters and Painting by Elia,* December. [Not extant.]

1833

XCVIII. *The Athenæum: On the Total Defect of the Quality of Imagination,* &c., Jan. 12, 19, 26, Feb. 2; *Christian Names of Women* (*In the Album of Edith S——*), March 9; *Review of Moxon's 'Sonnets,'* Apr. 13; *Thoughts on Presents of Game, &c.* November 30; *To a Friend on his Marriage,* December 7; *To T. Stothard, Esq.,* December 21.

XCIX. *The Times:* Sonnet, *To Samuel Rogers, Esq., On the New Edition of his 'Pleasures of Memory'*, Dec. 13.

C. *The Last Essays of Elia. Being a Sequel to Essays Published under that Name.* London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. 1833. 12mo, pp. xii, 283. Issued in paper-covered boards, edges untrimmed ($7\frac{7}{8} \times 4\frac{7}{8}$in.), with label.

Contents:—Preface by a Friend of the Late Elia; Blakesmoor in H——shire; Poor Relations; Stage Illusions; To the Shade of Elliston; Ellistoniana; Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading; The Old Margate Hoy; The Convalescent; Sanity of True Genius; Captain Jackson; The Superannuated Man; The Genteel Style in Writing; Barbara S——; The Tombs in the Abbey; Amicus Redivivus; Some Sonnets of Sir Philip Sydney; Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago; Barrenness of the Imaginative Faculty in the Productions of Modern Art; Rejoicings

upon the New Year's Coming of Age; The Wedding; The Child Angel, A Dream; A Deathbed; Old China; Popular Fallacies, Nos. I.—XVI.

CI. *The Wife: A Tale of Mantua. A Play, in Five Acts. By James Sheridan Knowles, Author of 'Virginius', 'The Hunchback', &c.* London: Edward Moxon, Dover Street. 1833. 8vo, pp. xii, 120.

Issued in paper covers, edges untrimmed ($8\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$in.), with label on front: 'The Wife: A Tale of Mantua. By James Sheridan Knowles. Price Four Shillings'.

Pp. ix, x, *Prologue. Spoken by Mr. Warde.*

Pp. 119–20, *Epilogue. Written by Charles Lamb. Spoken by Miss Ellen Tree.*

1834

CII. *The Athenæum: Table Talk,* Jan. 4; May 31; June 7; July 19; *Cheap Gifts: A Sonnet,* Feb. 15; *To Clara N[ovello],* July 26.

Growth of the body of Collected Works.—After Lamb's death (Dec. 27, 1834) the earliest addition to his collected writings was made in 1836, when, in the volume entitled *The Poetical Works of Charles Lamb. A New Edition* (Edward Moxon, 1836, 8vo) the following[1] pieces were added to the *Album Verses* of 1830: [Sonnets]: *In the Album of Edith S[outhey]; *To Dora W[ordsworth]; *In the Album of Rotha Q[uillinan]; Cheap Gifts: A Sonnet*; [Commendatory Verses:] *To T. Stothard, Esq.; To a Friend on his Marriage; To Louisa M[artin];* [Stanzas:] **In the Album of Catherine Orkney;* [Lines:] *The Self-Enchanted; *Free Thoughts on Several Eminent Composers*—in all, ten pieces.

In 1837 Lamb's friend and executor, Thomas Noon Talfourd, printed *The Letters of Charles Lamb, with a Sketch of his Life* (Edw. Moxon, 2 vols. 8vo). In 1840 he edited for Moxon *The Works of Charles Lamb,* with the letters and the sketch of 1837, a portrait, and an engraved title-page. This edition was issued in five parts, afterwards bound up together in one imperial octavo volume, which was at least thrice reprinted with the addition, after 1848, of the *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb* published by Talfourd in that year. To the collected writings already printed Talfourd added nothing. He simply brought together the contents of the *Works* of 1818, of *Elia* (1823) and the *Last Essays* (1833), and of the *Album Verses* (1830) including the ten pieces added, as stated above, in *The Poetical Works* of 1836.

In 1863 Mr. J. E. Babson of Chelsea, U.S., reprinted in the pages of *The Atlantic Monthly* a number of Lamb's fugitive writings. In

[1] The pieces asterisked appeared for the first time.

1864 he reissued his collections at Boston in a volume entitled *Eliana : Being the Hitherto Uncollected Writings of Charles Lamb* ; and before the close of the year the book appeared in London with the imprint of Moxon & Co. Mr. Babson's material included seven Tales, viz :—*The Adventures of Ulysses* (M. J. Godwin, 1808) ; *Maria Howe ; Susan Yates ;* and *Arabella Hardy* (from *Mrs. Leicester's School*, M. J. Godwin, 1809) ; *Reminiscences of Juke Judkins, Esq.* (*New Monthly Mag.*, 1826) ; *Cupid's Revenge* (*Harper's Mag.*, 1858) ; and *The Defeat of Time* (Hone's *Table Book*, 1827) ; a Farce, *The Pawnbroker's Daughter* (*Blackwood's Mag.*, 1830) ; the following Essays and Sketches (1) from *The London Magazine ; The Gentle Giantess ; Guy Faux ; A Vision of Horns ; John Kemble and Godwin's 'Antonio' ; On a Passage in 'The Tempest' ; Biographical Memoir of Mr. Liston ; Autobiography of Mr. Munden ; Postscript to the 'Chapter on Ears' ; Elia to his Correspondents ; Unitarian Protests ; Letter to an Old Gentleman whose Education*, &c. ; *Elia on his 'Confessions of a Drunkard' ; The Last Peach ; Reflections in the Pillory ; A Character of the late Elia ;* (2) from *The Reflector : The Good Clerk*, &c. ; *On the Custom of Hissing at the Theatres ; On the Ambiguities arising from Proper Names ;* (3) from *The Examiner : The Reynolds Gallery ;* (4) from Hone's *Every-day Book : Reminiscence of Sir Jeffery Dunstan ; The Months ; The Ass ; In Re Squirrels ; Captain Starkey ;* (5) from *The New Monthly Magazine : The Illustrious Defunct ; The Religion of Actors ; The Death of Coleridge* (Feb., 1835) ; *Charles Lamb's Autobiography* (April, 1835) ; A popular Fallacy ('That a Deformed Person is a Lord') ; (6) from *The Athenæum : Table Talk ;* (7) from Walter Wilson's *Life of Defoe : Estimate of De Foe's Secondary Novels*—in all, thirty-two papers. Mr. Babson also reprinted the following poems : *Existence, Considered in Itself, No Blessing*, and *The Parting Speech of the Celestial Messenger to the Poet* (two versions from the Latin of Palingenius printed in *The Athenæum*) ; *Hercules Pacificatus, a Tale from Suidas* (*Englishman's Magazine*) ; and [Commendatory Verses] *To C. Aders, Esq.* (Hone's *Year-Book*).

Under the heading, *A Saturday's Dinner*, Mr. Babson also collected the following nine fragments :—*Dryden and Collier*, and *An American War for Helen* (from *Table Talk* in *The Examiner*, 1813) ; 'Oh the comfort of sitting down to an old folio,' &c. (a passage from the *Popular Fallacy* 'That Home is Home,' &c., in *The New Monthly Magazine*, omitted in *The Last Essays*, 1833) ; *Anecdote of Lamb and the Beggar-woman, with an account of Joseph Hume's MS. of 'The Beggar's Petition'* (the conclusion of *A Complaint of the Decay of Beggars*, &c., in *The London Magazine*, omitted from *Elia*, 1823) ; *Lamb's repugnance to literature in MS.* (note to *Oxford in the Vacation*, in *The London Magazine*, omitted in *Elia*, 1823) ; *The Puritans' distinction between a day of religious rest and a day of recreation* (footnote to *The Superannuated Man, L. M.*

omitted in *The Last Essays*, 1833); *Reading at the Play-house Door* (paragraph in *Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading, L. M.*, omitted in *The Last Essays*, 1833); *Donne* and *Cowley contrasted with Shenstone and Parnell* (the conclusion of a note to *Specimens from the Writings of Fuller*, in *The Reflector*, 1811, omitted in the *Works*, 1818); and *George Dyer's experience as an Usher* (paragraph in *Oxford in the Vacation, L. M.*, omitted in *Elia*, 1823). *On Samuel Johnson, the Whig*, printed from a transcript in Lamb's writing on the fly-leaf of a copy of *The Works of Mr. Samuel Johnson*, is in fact Coleridge's, not Lamb's, composition.

In Percy Fitzgerald's *Charles Lamb; his Friends, his Haunts, and his Books* (Bentley, 1866) two pieces were added to Lamb's collected verse: the lines entitled *What is an Album?* reprinted from *Notes and Queries*, Oct. 11, 1856; and the Hexameters *In Tabulam Eximii Pictoris*, with the English version, contributed by Lamb, over the signature *Carlagnulus*, to *The Champion* in 1820.

In 1868 there appeared the first volume (all published) of a new collected edition in four volumes of the prose and verse, *The Complete Correspondence and Works of Charles Lamb, with an Essay 'On the Genius of Charles Lamb' by George Augustus Sala* (London: E. Moxon & Co., 12mo). This volume was reissued (with an essay by Thomas Purnell substituted for that by Sala) and vols. II—IV published by Moxon & Co. in 1870. Besides including the seven tales, the farce, the forty-one prose pieces and the four poems of Mr. Babson's *Eliana*, this edition comprised the following prose items now first added: *The Death of Munden* and *Thoughts on Presents of Game* (*The Athenæum*); *Recollections of a late Royal Academician* (*Englishman's Magazine*); *Saturday Night* (*The Gem Annual*; *Ritson* versus *John Scott the Quaker* (*The London Magazine*). The following poems also were now first collected: [Sonnets:] *To Mrs Siddons* (S. T. Coleridge's *Poems*, 1797); *Saint Crispin to Mr Gifford* (*The Examiner*, 1819); [Blank Verse:] *Written a Year after the Events* (Letter to Coleridge, Sept. 1797); *Fragment:* 'A stranger, and alone, I pass'd those scenes We pass'd,' &c. (Letter to Coleridge, Sept. 1797; Talfourd, *Final Memorials*, I. 95); *The Triumph of the Whale* (*The Examiner*, 1812); *To William Ayrton, Esq.* (Letter, May 17, 1817; Talfourd, *Letters*, 1837, II. 31); *The Three Graves* and *The Godlike* (*The Champion*, 1820); *To Clara N[ovello]*, (*The Athenæum*, July 26, 1834); *To Margaret W—* (*The Athenæum*, Mar. 14, 1835); *To M[ary] L[ocke]* and *To S[arah] L[ocke]*[1] (reprinted from *Charles Lamb. A Memoir. By Barry Cornwall.* Moxon, 1866); **To Mrs. F[ield] on her Return from*

[1] These two little pieces should have been mentioned above, in a separate paragraph under the year 1866. Note that the two blank-verse fragments in this list were reprinted in ed. 1870 from Talfourd—not from Lamb's and Lloyd's joint volume entitled *Blank Verse*, 1798.

*Gibraltar ; *To E[sther] F[ield] ; * To M. L. F[ield] ; Epilogue* to *The Wife : A Play by J. S. Knowles.*

Besides these additions in verse and prose there appears in vol. IV a **Comic Opera,* now first printed from a MS. (Add. MSS. 25,924) presented to the British Museum in 1864 by Coventry Patmore, and described by his father, P. G. Patmore (*My Friends and Acquaintance,* vol. I App.) as 'unquestionably Lamb's first substantial production . . . every portion of the manuscript . . . being in his own handwriting.' The *Comic Opera* was reprinted by Charles Kent (*Works of Charles Lamb,* Routledge, 1876) but has been rightly omitted from every other edition subsequent to 1870. The handwriting, though similar in some respects to Lamb's, is, in the opinion of those best qualified to judge, not his ; nor is there in the dialogue or the incidental songs any trace of Lamb's distinctive style or manner.

In 1872 Basil Montagu Pickering published a slender volume entitled *Poetry for Children, by Charles and Mary Lamb, Edited and Prefaced by Richard Herne Shepherd.* This was merely a collection, from *The Poetical Class-Book* (1810) and *The First Book of Poetry* (1811) edited for M. J. Godwin by W. F. Mylius, of twenty-five pieces from the Lambs' *Poetry for Children,* published by M. J. Godwin in 1809. (For the titles of these pieces see the foregoing *Bibliographical List* under the years 1810, 1811). Three pieces from *Poetry for Children* (1809) reprinted in the *Works* of 1818, viz. *The Three Friends, To a River in which a Child was Drowned,* and *Queen Oriana's Dream,* are also included, along with ten other poems of ed. 1818, which have no claim to be described as 'Poetry for Children'. In this volume Mary Lamb's Sonnet *To Emma Learning Latin, and Desponding* was first collected from *Blackwood's Magazine,* June, 1829.

In 1874 appeared *The Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Charles Lamb . . . Edited and Prefaced by R. H. Shepherd* (Chatto & Windus). In this volume the following prose pieces were first collected: *Wordsworth's 'Excursion'* (Quarterly Review, Oct. 1814); six papers from *The Examiner,* 1819–20, viz. *Richard Brome's 'Jovial Crew' ; Isaac Bickerstaff's 'Hypocrite' ; New Pieces at The Lyceum ; Falstaff's Letters ; Nugae Canorae* (Poems by Charles Lloyd) ; *First Fruits of Australian Poetry* (Verses by Barron Field) ; Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare,* viz. *King Lear, Macbeth, Timon of Athens, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Othello.* Mr. Shepherd also printed a letter *To Mr. Charles Lamb,* printed, under the heading *The Turk in Cheapside,* in *The Table Book,* 1827, and signed E. C. *M. D.* This, on internal evidence, he assigned to Lamb ; but the letter is certainly not Lamb's work—merely a clever imitation. Besides these prose additions Mr. Shepherd collected the following poems :—*The Tomb of Douglas* (*Poems of S. T. Coleridge,* &c., 1797) ; five pieces contributed by Lamb to *Blank Verse by Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb,*

1798, but never reprinted by him, viz., *To Charles Lloyd* [1]; *Written on the Day of my Aunt's Funeral; Written a Year after the Events* [1]; *Written soon after the Preceding Poem*; *Written on Christmas-Day*, 1797; [Blank Verse:] *Living without God in the World* (*Annual Anthology*, 1799); [Sonnet:] *To my Friend the Indicator*, (Sept. 27, 1820); *Lines suggested by a sight of Waltham Cross* (*Englishman's Magazine*, Sept. 1831); *Prologue* to *Remorse, a Tragedy, by S. T. Coleridge*, 1813. A notable feature of this edition consists in the reproduction throughout, both in prose and verse, of the original text. Thus the *Essays of Elia* are reprinted from the pages of *The London Magazine; John Woodvil* and the *Curious Fragments from Burton's Common-place book* from the volume of 1802; and the later poems from the several journals, &c., in which they first appeared. The volume was reprinted in 1875, and again in 1878 with the addition of the complete contents of the Lambs' *Poetry for Children* (1809), a copy of which had been recovered early in 1877, and immediately reprinted by Mr. Shepherd.

In the same year that saw Mr. Shepherd's edition of *The Complete Works* (1874) Mr. W. C. Hazlitt printed a miscellany under the title of *Mary and Charles Lamb: Poems, Letters and Remains* (Chatto & Windus, 8vo). In this were collected **Nonsense Verses* ('Lazy bones, lazy bones, wake up and peep,' &c.), now first printed from a MS. in Lamb's handwriting which Mr. Hazlitt found serving as a wrapper for some of William Hazlitt's hair; *A Dramatic Fragment* (*The Dying Lover*) from *The London Magazine*, January, 1822; *A Birth-Day Thought* (six stanzas printed in Mylius' *First Book of Poetry* over the signature *M. L.* in the first edition (1811), altered in that of 1817 to *C. L.*); [Epigrams:] *On the 'Literary Gazette'* (letter to V. Novello) and **For the 'Table Book'* (letter to W. Hone, Sept. 2, 1827); two letters *To the Editor of 'The Table Book'*, on the *Dramatic Specimens* contributed to that journal in 1827; one to the same, on the Sonnet *To a Celebrated Female Performer in the 'Blind Boy'*; and a letter to Novello on a song in Peele's *Arraygnment of Paris* (*Table Book*, 1827).

In 1875 appeared *The Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb, edited, with Notes and Illustrations, by Percy Fitzgerald* (Moxon, 6 vols. 8vo). In this the following prose pieces were first collected:—*Remarkable Correspondent; Twelfth of August* (*Humble Petition of an Unfortunate Day*); *An Appearance of the Season* (all three from the *Every-Day Book*); *Mrs. Gilpin Riding to Edmonton* (*Table Book*); *Miss Kelly at Bath* (*The Examiner*, 1819); and a **Criticism on a Friend's MS.* (from the Patmore Papers, British Museum). Mr. Fitzgerald also added the following verses to the collected

[1] Note, however, that these two fragments had been already collected from Talfourd, *Letters*, ii. 31, and *Final Memorials*, i. 95, in Moxon's four-volume edition of 1870.

poems:—*Epitaph on a Young Lady* (Talfourd, *Letters*, 1837, I. 251); *Fragment*—'I saw him in the day of Worcester fight' (Talfourd, Letters, 1837, I. 125); *Epilogue* to *Antonio, a Tragedy, by W. Godwin* (Talfourd, Letters, 1837, I. 193); [Epigram] *To Sir James Mackintosh* (Talfourd, *Final Memorials*, 1848, I. 130); [Verses] *In a Copy of 'Cœlebs'* (*Final Memorials*, I. 170); *Suum Cuique*; **One Dip* (*Brevis Esse Laboro*); *The Ape* (*London Magazine*, Oct. 1820); *On being asked to write in Miss Westwood's Album* (*Notes and Queries*, June 4, 1870); and six political squibs from *The Champion* of 1820, viz. *On a Projected Journey*; *The Unbeloved*; 'Ye politicians, tell me pray,' &c.; *Sonnet to Matthew Wood, Esq.*; *Song for the C——n*; *To a late Empiric of Balmy Memory*.

In 1878 appeared the reprint above alluded to—*Poetry for Children. By Charles and Mary Lamb . . . Edited, Prefaced and Annotated by Richard Herne Shepherd* (Chatto and Windus, 8vo). In this the eighty-four pieces which formed the contents of the original publication (1809) were reprinted, and to them Mr. Shepherd added the following items, now first collected:—*Prince Dorus* (M. J. Godwin, 1811); *To Miss Westwood: by Mary Lamb* (*Notes and Queries*, June 4, 1870); *Lines addressed to Lieut. R. W. H. Hardy, R.N.* (*The Athenæum*, Jan. 10, 1846); *The First Leaf of Spring* (*The Athenæum*, Jan. 10, 1846); [Blank Verse] *To the Poet Cowper* (*Monthly Mag.*, Dec. 1796); *Lines addressed to Sara and S. T. C.* (*Monthly Mag.*, Jan. 1797); *Sonnet to a Friend* ('Friend of my earliest years and childish days', &c.—*Monthly Mag.*, Oct. 1797); *Sonnet* ('The Lord of Life shakes off his drowsihed,' &c.—*Monthly Mag.*, Dec. 1797); and the *Prologue* to *Faulkener: A Tragedy by William Godwin*, 1807. The contents of this volume were added to the 1878 reprint of Mr. Shepherd's edition, *The Complete Works in Verse and Prose*, &c., originally published in 1874.

In 1883 Canon Ainger edited the first volume (*Elia* and the *Last Essays*) of a selective edition of Lamb's verse and prose (Macmillan: 'Eversley' Series). *Poems, Plays, and Essays* appeared in 1884, *Mrs. Leicester's School*, &c., followed in 1885, and the *Letters* in 1888 (2 vols). Canon Ainger omitted many of the prose pieces and verses collected by former editors, and added to the body of the works only three items,[1] viz. *Shakespeare's Improvers*, a letter to the editor of *The Spectator*, printed Nov. 22, 1828; Lines **To the Book*, written by Lamb in the Album of Sophia E. Frend (Mrs. De Morgan) and printed in her book, *Three score years and Ten*; and an **Acrostic to Mrs. Williams* ('Go, little Poem,' &c.).

In 1883 appeared *Mary Lamb, by Mrs. Gilchrist* (W. H. Allen & Co.). In this were collected Mary Lamb's article *On Needle Work* contributed to *The British Lady's Magazine*, April, 1815, and her *lines

[1] Canon Ainger, however, was the first of Lamb's editors to collect Mary's share, as well as that of Charles, in *Mrs. Leicester's School* and *The Tales from Shakspeare* (Macmillan, 1878).

suggested by the drowning of John Wordsworth in 1805 during Coleridge's absence at Malta.

In W. C. Hazlitt's *The Lambs; their Lives, their Friends, and their Correspondence* (Elkin Mathews, 1897) the following verses are collected:—*Sonnet to Samuel Rogers, Esq., on the New Edition of his 'Pleasures of Memory'* (*The Times*, Dec. 13, 1833); *Sonnet to Miss Burney, on her Character of 'Blanch'* (*Morning Chronicle*, July 13, 1820); **An Acrostic against Acrostics*; and **To R. Q.* [Rotha Quillinan].

In the same author's *Lamb and Hazlitt* (Elkin Mathews, 1900) are printed **The Sisters* (six lines on three daughters of V. Novello) and twenty-six * lines on the birth of William Hazlitt, Junior, which are clearly Mary Lamb's composition.

In Mr. Bertram Dobell's *Sidelights on Charles Lamb*, published by the author in 1903, the following additions are made to the collected works of Lamb:—*The Confessions of H. F. V. H. Delamore, Esq.* (*London Magazine*, III. 383); and the fragments in the same journal entitled *Scraps of Criticism; The Choice of a Grave; Wilks; Milton.* Amongst sundry pieces in the *London Magazine* conjecturally assigned to Lamb by Mr. Dobell is *An Appeal from the Shades* (vol. V., New Series, p. 527; August, 1826) which shows strong but not quite convincing traces of his manner. It is printed in the Appendix of this edition.

In 1903 appeared the first volume (*Miscellaneous Prose*) of *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb, edited by E. V. Lucas* (Methuen & Co.), of which the seventh and final volume (*The Letters*, vol. II) appeared in 1905. Mr. Lucas has made many notable additions to the collected prose, and not a few to the body of the verse. Amongst the former are the *Grand State Bed; A Fable for Twelfth Day; G. F. Cooke in 'Richard the Third'*; and *G. F. Cooke in 'King Lear'* (*Morning Post*, 1802); *Memoir of Robert Lloyd* (*Gentleman's Magazine*, 1811); seven articles printed under the heading of *Table Talk* in *The Examiner* of 1813, viz. *The New Acting; Books with One Idea in them; A Sylvan Surprise; Street Conversation; A Town Residence; Gray's 'Bard'*; and *Playhouse Memoranda; Keats's 'Lamia'* (*New Times*, 1820); *Sir Thomas More* (*The Indicator*, 1820); six papers printed in *The New Times*, 1825, signed 'Lepus', viz. *Many Friends*; *Readers against the Grain*; *Mortifications of an Author*; *Tom Pry*; *Tom Pry's Wife*; and *A Character*; *'Odes and Addresses to Great People'* (a notice of, *New Times*, 1825); *Clarence Songs* (*The Spectator*); *The Latin Poems of Vincent Bourne* (*Englishman's Magazine*); *Mrs. Gould in 'Don Giovanni in London'* (*Examiner*, 1818); *Review of Dibdin's 'Comic Tales'* (*New Times*, 1825); *Dog Days* (*Every-Day Book*, 1825); *Review of Moxon's 'Sonnets'* (*Athenæum*, 1833); *Review of Hood's 'Progress of Cant'* (*New Monthly Magazine*, 1826); *Mr. Ephraim Wagstaff, His Wife and Pipe* (*Table Book*, 1827: about the authorship of this Mr. Lucas

is 'not quite convinced'); *A True Story* (*Indicator*, 1820). Mr. Lucas has also identified as Lamb's *The King and Queen of Hearts* (M. J. Godwin, 1806), which he has added to the *Books for Children* (vol. III, 1903 of his edition); and he has enlarged the body of collected verse by the following additions:—*Lines to a Young Lady* (*Monthly Magazine*, 1797); *Lines for a Monument* (*Athenæum*, 1831; *To S*[*ophia*] *F*[*rend*] (Mrs. de Morgan's *Three Score Years and Ten*); *To Sarah James of Beguildy* (Hollingshead's *My Lifetime*); **Love Will Come* (Unpublished letter from Lamb to Maria Fryer); five pieces from Lamb's Album, viz. **Un Solitaire*; **To S*[*arah*] *T*[*homas*]; **Acrostic on Joseph Vale Asbury*; **To D*[*orothy*] *A*[*sbury*]; and **To Louisa Morgan*; **Acrostic on Sarah Robinson*; **To Sarah* [*Apsey*]; Epigrams: *Sir Toby Fillpot; Mr. A*[*ddington*]; *Mr. P*[*it*]*t*; and *Messrs. C*[*annin*]*g and F*[*rer*]*e* (*Morning Post*, 1802); *Epigram*: 'Princeps his rent,' &c. (*Examiner*, 1812); *The Poetical Cask* (*New Times*, 1825); *The Royal Wonders* (*Times*, 1830); *Epigram: On the Fast-Day* (Collier's *Old Man's Diary*); *Dick Strype* (*Morning Post*, 1802); *Count Rumford* (letter to Rickman, 1802); 'Where the soul drinks', &c. (*The Mirror*, June, 1833); *Mille Viae Mortis* (Rev. John Boyer's *Liber Aureus*); *Acrostic on Emma Button* (letter to J. Aitken, 1825); **Marmor Loquitur* (letter to Southey, 1799), and *Epitaphs* on *Timothy Wagstaff, Captain Sturms, Margaret Dix, Doctor Drake* and *Captain Day* (*New York Tribune*, 1879). *Epilogue to 'Time's a Tell-Tale'*; *Epilogue to 'Debtor and Creditor'*; *Prologue to 'The Wife'*. Mr. Lucas prints as probably Lamb's an eight-line Epigram, *On a Visit to St. Paul's* (*Examiner*, 1821); *Danae Exposed with her Infant* (English Sapphics in *The Champion*, 1820); and *Lines on seeing Mrs. K— B—, aged upwards of Eighty, nurse an Infant* (*Tickler Magazine*, 1821).

In 1903 there also appeared *The Works of Charles Lamb, edited by William Macdonald* (Methuen & Co., 12 vols.). Mr. Macdonald includes in his fourth volume (*Essays and Sketches*), on the internal evidence of style and matter, the following pieces from *The Indicator* 1820–1:—*Old Maids*; *Mrs. B.*; *Holiday Children*; and in vol. III (*Critical Essays*) *Observations on a Dry Book* from the same journal, and a Review of Barry Cornwall's 'Marcian Colonna' (*New Times*, July 22, 1820). In vol. V (*Poems and Plays*) Mr. Macdonald, on similar evidence, collects two Epigrams—*On Miss F. A—T—N, of the K. T.*, and *A Horsey Pair*—from *The Athenæum*, August 6, 1821. In a note to the Preface of the same volume he prints, as possibly Lamb's, a Sonnet *To a London Steeple*, noted by Mr. Bertram Dobell as having an Elian flavour and signature.

Since 1903–5 attention has been called by Major S. Butterworth in *Notes and Queries* to a quatrain *To William Frend*, printed by Mrs. De Morgan in *Three Score Years and Ten*; and by Mr. Walter Jerrold in *The Athenæum* to two little pieces,—a quatrain, *From the Latin*, and lines *Written upon the Cover of a Blotting-Book*—

printed in *The Mirror*, 1836. These are included in the present edition.

In the *Edition de luxe* of Canon Ainger's *Poems, Plays and Essays*, published by Macmillan & Co. in 1900, there appears for the first time an **Epilogue* written by Lamb for an amateur performance of *Richard the Second*, given by the family of Barron Field in 1824.

In the foregoing account of the growth by successive accretions of the body of the Lambs' collected writings, one or two items may possibly have been overlooked. This review of the subject will, however, it is hoped, serve to exhibit with substantial accuracy the successive stages of the slow and desultory process.

T. H.

ADDENDA.—In 1862 appeared Mrs. Cowden Clarke's *Life and Labours of Vincent Novello*, in which was printed Mary Lamb's *Postscript* to her brother's *Free Thoughts on Several Eminent Composers*.

In Moxon & Co.'s *Complete Correspondence and Works*, &c., 1870, *Charles Lamb : A Memoir, by Barry Cornwall* (Bryan Waller Procter), originally published in 1862, was reprinted at the end of the fourth volume.

In this survey no account is taken of the verses printed in the several successive editions of Lamb's correspondence. Several of Lamb's poems existed in print in the pages of Talfourd's (1837, 1848), Fitzgerald's (1875), W. C. Hazlitt's (1885) and Ainger's (1888) editions of the letters long before they found their way into the *Works*. Two pieces—the *Serenata* composed on the occasion of the Cowden Clarkes' wedding, and the *Metrical Epistle to John Bates Dibdin*—printed hitherto in their respective places in the correspondence, appear for the first time amongst the poems in this edition.

MISCELLANEOUS PROSE, 1798-1834

ROSAMUND GRAY. A TALE

[Composed 1797–8. Published 1798 (summer) by Thomas Pearson, Birmingham, and (with reprinted title-page) by Lee and Hurst, 32 Paternoster Row, London, under the title, *A Tale of Rosamund Gray and Old Blind Margaret. By Charles Lamb.*[1] Reprinted in *Works*, 1818. Text of 1818.]

CHAPTER I

It was noontide. The sun was very hot. An old gentlewoman sat spinning in a little arbour at the door of her cottage. She was blind; and her grandaughter was reading the Bible to her. The old lady had just left her work, to attend to the story of Ruth.

'Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her.' It was a passage she could not let pass without a *comment*. The moral she drew from it was not very *new*, to be sure. The girl had heard it a hundred times before—and a hundred times more she could have heard it, without suspecting it to be tedious. Rosamund loved her grandmother.

The old lady loved Rosamund too; and she had reason for so doing. Rosamund was to her at once a child and a servant. She had only *her* left in the world. They two lived together.

They had once known better days. The story of Rosamund's parents, their failure, their folly, and distresses, may be told another time. Our tale hath grief enough in it.

It was now about a year and a half since old Margaret Gray had sold off all her effects, to pay the debts of Rosamund's father—just after the mother had died of a broken

[1] *In* 1798 *the book has the following dedication:* This Tale is inscribed in friendship to Marmaduke Thompson, of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge.

heart; for her husband had fled his country to hide his shame in a foreign land. At that period the old lady retired to a small cottage, in the village of Widford, in Hertfordshire.

Rosamund, in her thirteenth year, was left destitute, without fortune or friends: she went with her grandmother. In all this time she had served her faithfully and lovingly.

Old Margaret Gray, when she first came into these parts, had eyes, and could see. The neighbours said, they had been dimmed by weeping: be that as it may, she was latterly grown quite blind. 'God is very good to us, child; I can *feel* you yet.' This she would sometimes say; and we need not wonder to hear, that Rosamund clave unto her grandmother.

Margaret retained a spirit unbroken by calamity. There was a principle *within*, which it seemed as if no outward circumstances could reach. It was a *religious* principle, and she had taught it to Rosamund; for the girl had mostly resided with her grandmother from her earliest years. Indeed she had taught her all that she knew herself; and the old lady's knowledge did not extend a vast way.

Margaret had drawn her maxims from observation; and a pretty long experience in life had contributed to make her, at times, a little *positive:* but Rosamund never argued with her grandmother.

Their library consisted chiefly in a large family Bible, with notes and expositions by various learned expositors from Bishop Jewell downwards.

This might never be suffered to lie about like other books —but was kept constantly wrapt up in a handsome case of green velvet, with gold tassels—the only relick of departed grandeur they had brought with them to the cottage—every thing else of value had been sold off for the purpose above mentioned.

This Bible Rosamund, when a child, had never dared to open without permission; and even yet, from habit, continued the custom. Margaret had parted with none of her *authority;* indeed it was never exerted with much harshness; and happy was Rosamund, though a girl grown, when she could obtain leave to read her Bible. It was a treasure too valuable for an indiscriminate use; and Margaret still pointed out to her grandaughter *where to read.*

Besides this, they had the ' Complete Angler, or Contemplative Man's Recreation ', with cuts—' Pilgrim's Progress,' the first part—a Cookery Book, with a few dry sprigs of rosemary and lavender stuck here and there between the leaves, (I suppose, to point to some of the old lady's most favorite receipts,) and there was ' Wither's Emblems ', an old book, and quaint. The old fashioned pictures in this last book were among the first exciters of the infant Rosamund's curiosity. Her contemplation had fed upon them in rather older years.

Rosamund had not read many books besides these ; or if any, they had been only occasional companions : these were to Rosamund as old friends, that she had long known. I know not whether the peculiar cast of her mind might not be traced, in part, to a tincture she had received, early in life, from Walton, and Wither, from John Bunyan, and her Bible.

Rosamund's mind was pensive and reflective, rather than what passes usually for *clever* or *acute*. From a child she was remarkably shy and thoughtful—this was taken for stupidity and want of feeling ; and the child has been sometimes whipt for being a *stubborn thing*, when her little heart was almost bursting with affection.

Even now her grandmother would often reprove her, when she found her too grave or melancholy ; give her sprightly lectures about good humour and rational mirth ; and not unfrequently fall a crying herself, to the great discredit of her lecture. Those tears endeared her the more to Rosamund.

Margaret would say, ' Child, I love you to cry, when I think you are only remembering your poor dear father and mother—I would have you think about them sometimes —it would be strange if you did not—but I fear, Rosamund ; I fear, girl, you sometimes think too deeply about your own situation and poor prospects in life. When you do so, you do wrong—remember the naughty rich man in the parable. He never had any good thoughts about God, and his religion : and that might have been your case.'

Rosamund, at these times, could not reply to her ; she was not in the habit of *arguing* with her grandmother ; so she was quite silent on these occasions—or else the girl

knew well enough herself, that she had only been sad to think of the desolate condition of her best friend, to see her, in her old age, so infirm and blind. But she had never been used to make excuses, when the old lady said she was doing wrong.

The neighbours were all very kind to them. The veriest rustics never passed them without a bow, or a pulling off of the hat—some shew of courtesy, aukward indeed, but affectionate—with a ' good morrow, madam ', or ' young madam ', as it might happen.

Rude and savage natures, who seem born with a propensity to express contempt for any thing that looks like prosperity, yet felt respect for its declining lustre.

The farmers, and better sort of people, (as they are called,) all promised to provide for Rosamund, when her grandmother should die. Margaret trusted in God, and believed them.

She used to say, ' I have lived many years in the world, and have never known people, *good people*, to be left without some friend ; a relation, a benefactor, a *something*. God knows our wants—that it is not good for man or woman to be alone ; and he always sends us a helpmate, a leaning-place, a *somewhat*.' Upon this sure ground of experience, did Margaret build her trust in Providence.

CHAPTER II

Rosamund had just made an end of her story, (as I was about to relate,) and was listening to the application of the moral, (which said application she was old enough to have made herself, but her grandmother still continued to treat her, in many respects, as a child, and Rosamund was in no haste to lay claim to the title of womanhood,) when a young gentleman made his appearance, and interrupted them.

It was young Allan Clare, who had brought a present of peaches, and some roses, for Rosamund.

He laid his little basket down on a seat of the arbour ; and in a respectful tone of voice, as though he were addressing a parent, enquired of Margaret ' how she did '.

The old lady seemed pleased with his attentions—answered his enquiries by saying, that ' her cough was less troublesome a-nights, but she had not yet got rid of it, and probably she never might ; but she did not like to teaze young people with an account of her infirmities '.

A few kind words passed on either side, when young Clare, glancing a tender look at the girl, who had all this time been silent, took leave of them with saying ' I shall bring *Elinor* to see you in the evening '.

When he was gone, the old lady began to prattle.

' That is a sweet dispositioned youth, and I *do* love him dearly, I must say it—there is such a modesty in all he says or does—he should not come here so often, to be sure, but I don't know how to help it ; there is so much goodness in him, I can't find in my heart to forbid him. But, Rosamund, girl, I must tell you beforehand ; when you grow older, Mr. Clare must be no companion for *you*—while you were both so young, it was all very well—but the time is coming, when folks will think harm of it, if a rich young gentleman, like Mr. Clare, comes so often to our poor cottage.—Dost hear, girl ? why don't you answer ? come, I did not mean to say any thing to hurt you—speak to me, Rosamund—nay, I must not have you be sullen—I don't love people that are sullen.'

And in this manner was this poor soul running on, unheard and unheeded, when it occurred to her, that possibly the girl might not be *within hearing.*

And true it was, that Rosamund had slunk away at the first mention of Mr. Clare's good qualities : and when she returned, which was not till a few minutes after Margaret had made an end of her fine harangue, it is certain her cheeks *did* look very *rosy.* That might have been from the heat of the day or from exercise, for she had been walking in the garden.

Margaret, we know, was blind ; and, in this case, it was lucky for Rosamund that she was so, or she might have made some not unlikely surmises.

I must not have my reader infer from this, that I at all think it likely, a young maid of fourteen would fall in love without asking her grandmother's leave—the thing itself is not to be conceived.

To obviate all suspicions, I am disposed to communicate a little anecdote of Rosamund.

A month or two back her grandmother had been giving her the strictest prohibitions, in her walks, not to go near a certain spot, which was dangerous from the circumstance of a huge overgrown oak tree spreading its prodigious arms across a deep chalk-pit, which they partly concealed.

To this fatal place Rosamund came one day—female curiosity, we know, is older than the flood—let us not think hardly of the girl, if she partook of the sexual failing.

Rosamund ventured further and further—climbed along one of the branches—approached the forbidden chasm—her foot slipped—she was not killed—but it was by a mercy she escaped—other branches intercepted her fall—and with a palpitating heart she made her way back to the cottage.

It happened that evening, that her grandmother was in one of her best humours, caressed Rosamund, talked of old times, and what a blessing it was they two found a shelter in their little cottage, and in conclusion told Rosamund, ' she was a good girl, and God would one day reward her for her kindness to her old blind grandmother.'

This was more than Rosamund could bear. Her morning's disobedience came fresh into her mind, she felt she did not deserve all this from Margaret, and at last burst into a fit of crying, and made confession of her fault. The old gentlewoman kissed and forgave her.

Rosamund never went near that naughty chasm again.

Margaret would never have heard of this, if Rosamund had not told of it herself. But this young maid had a delicate moral sense, which would not suffer her to take advantage of her grandmother, to deceive her, or conceal any thing from her, though Margaret was old, and blind, and easy to be imposed upon.

Another virtuous *trait* I recollect of Rosamund, and, now I am in the vein will tell it.

Some, I know, will think these things trifles—and they are so—but if these *minutiæ* make my reader better acquainted with Rosamund, I am content to abide the imputation.

These promises of character, hints, and early indications of a *sweet nature*, are to me more dear, and choice in the

selection, than any of those pretty wild flowers, which this young maid, this virtuous Rosamund, has ever gathered in a fine May morning, to make a posy to place in the bosom of her old blind friend.

Rosamund had a very just notion of drawing, and would often employ her talent in making sketches of the surrounding scenery.

On a landscape, a larger piece than she had ever yet attempted, she had now been working for three or four months. She had taken great pains with it, given much time to it, and it was nearly finished. For *whose* particular inspection it was designed, I will not venture to conjecture. We know it could not have been for her grandmother's.

One day she went out on a short errand, and left her landscape on the table. When she returned she found it *gone.*

Rosamund from the first suspected some mischief, but held her tongue. At length she made the fatal discovery. Margaret, in her absence, had laid violent hands on it ; not knowing what it was, but taking it for some waste paper, had torn it in half, and with one half of this elaborate composition had twisted herself up—a thread-paper !

Rosamund spread out her hands at sight of the disaster, gave her grandmother a roguish smile, but said not a word. She knew the poor soul would only fret, if she told her of it, —and when once Margaret was set a fretting for other people's misfortunes, the fit held her pretty long.

So Rosamund that very afternoon began another piece of the same size and subject ; and Margaret, to her dying day, never dreamed of the mischief she had unconsciously done.

CHAPTER III

Rosamund Gray was the most beautiful young creature that eyes ever beheld. Her face had the sweetest expression in it—a gentleness—a modesty—a timidity—a certain charm—a grace without a name.

There was a sort of melancholy mingled in her smile. It was not the thoughtless levity of a girl—it was not the restrained simper of premature womanhood—it was some-

thing which the poet Young might have remembered, when he composed that perfect line,

Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair.

She was a mild-eyed maid, and every body loved her. Young Allan Clare, when but a boy, sighed for her.

Her yellow hair fell in bright and curling clusters, like

those hanging locks
Of young Apollo.

Her voice was trembling and musical. A graceful diffidence pleaded for her whenever she spake—and, if she said but little, that little found its way to the heart.

Young, and artless, and innocent, meaning no harm, and thinking none; affectionate as a smiling infant—playful, yet inobtrusive, as a weaned lamb—every body loved her. Young Allan Clare, when but a boy, sighed for her.

The moon is shining in so brightly at my window, where I write, that I feel it a crime not to suspend my employment awhile to gaze at her.

See how she glideth, in maiden honour, through the clouds, who divide on either side to do her homage.

Beautiful vision!—as I contemplate thee, an internal harmony is communicated to my mind, a moral brightness, a tacit analogy of mental purity; a calm like *that* we ascribe in fancy to the favored inhabitants of thy fairy regions, 'argent fields.'

I marvel not, O moon, that heathen people, in the 'olden times', did worship thy deity—Cynthia, Diana, Hecate. Christian Europe invokes thee not by these names now—her idolatry is of a blacker stain: Belial is her God—she worships Mammon.

False things are told concerning thee, fair planet—for I will ne'er believe, that thou canst take a perverse pleasure in distorting the brains of us poor mortals. Lunatics! moonstruck! Calumny invented, and folly took up, these names. I would hope better things from thy mild aspect and benign influences.

Lady of Heaven, thou lendest thy pure lamp to light the

way to the virgin mourner, when she goes to seek the tomb where her warrior lover lies.

Friend of the distressed, thou speakest only *peace* to the lonely sufferer, who walks forth in the placid evening, beneath thy gentle light, to chide at fortune, or to complain of changed friends, or unhappy loves.

Do I dream, or doth not even now a heavenly calm descend from thee into my bosom, as I meditate on the chaste loves of Rosamund and her Clare?

CHAPTER IV

Allan Clare was just two years [1]elder than Rosamund. He was a boy of fourteen, when he first became acquainted with her—it was soon after she had come to reside with her grandmother at Widford.

He met her by chance one day, carrying a pitcher in her hand, which she had been filling from a neighbouring well—the pitcher was heavy, and she seemed to be bending with its weight.

Allan insisted on carrying it for her—for he thought it a sin, that a delicate young maid, like her, should be so employed, and he stand idle by.

Allan had a propensity to do little kind offices for every body—but at the sight of Rosamund Gray his first fire was kindled—his young mind seemed to have found an object, and his enthusiasm was from that time forth awakened. His visits, from that day, were pretty frequent at the cottage.

He was never happier than when he could get Rosamund to walk out with him. He would make her admire the scenes he admired—fancy the wild flowers he fancied—watch the clouds he was watching—and not unfrequently repeat to her poetry, which he loved, and make her love it.

On their return, the old lady, who considered them yet as but children, would bid Rosamund fetch Mr. Clare a glass of her currant wine, a bowl of new milk, or some cheap dainty, which was more welcome to Allan than the costliest delicacies of a prince's court.

The boy and girl, for they were no more at that age,

[1] elder] older 1798.

grew fond of each other—more fond than either of them suspected.

> They would sit, and sigh,
> And look upon each other, and conceive
> Not what they ail'd; yet something they did ail,
> And yet were well—and yet they were not well;
> And what was their disease, they could not tell.

And thus,

> In this first garden of their simpleness
> They spent their childhood.

A circumstance had lately happened, which in some sort altered the nature of their attachment.

Rosamund was one day reading the tale of 'Julia de Roubigné'—a book which young Clare had lent her.

Allan was standing by, looking over her, with one hand thrown round her neck, and a finger of the other pointing to a passage in Julia's third letter.

'Maria! in my hours of visionary indulgence, I have sometimes painted to myself a *husband*—no matter whom—comforting me amidst the distresses, which fortune had laid upon us. I have smiled upon him through my tears; tears, not of anguish, but of tenderness;—our children were playing around us, unconscious of misfortune; we had taught them to be humble, and to be happy; our little shed was reserved to us, and their smiles to cheer it.—I have imagined the luxury of such a scene, and affliction became a part of my dream of happiness.'

The girl blushed as she read, and trembled—she had a sort of confused sensation, that Allan was noticing her—yet she durst not lift her eyes from the book, but continued reading, scarce knowing what she read.

Allan guessed the cause of her confusion. Allan trembled too—his colour came and went—his feeling became impetuous—and, flinging both arms round her neck, he kissed his young favourite.

Rosamund was vexed and pleased, soothed and frightened, all in a moment—a fit of tears came to her relief.

Allan had indulged before in these little freedoms, and Rosamund had thought no harm of them—but from this time the girl grew timid and reserved—distant in her manner, and careful of her behaviour, in Allan's presence—

not seeking his society as before, but rather shunning it—delighting more to feed upon his idea in absence.

Allan too, from this day, seemed changed : his manner became, though not less tender, yet more respectful and diffident—his bosom felt a throb it had till now not known, in the society of Rosamund—and, if he was less familiar with her than in former times, that charm of delicacy had superadded a grace to Rosamund, which, while he feared, he loved.

There is a *mysterious character*, heightened indeed by fancy and passion, but not without foundation in reality and observation, which true lovers have ever imputed to the object of their affections. This character Rosamund had now acquired with Allan—something *angelic*, *perfect*, *exceeding nature*.

Young Clare dwelt very near to the cottage. He had lost his parents, who were rather wealthy, early in life ; and was left to the care of a sister, some ten years older than himself.

Elinor Clare was an excellent young lady—discreet, intelligent, and affectionate. Allan revered her as a parent, while he loved her as his own familiar friend. He told all the little secrets of his heart to her—but there was *one*, which he had hitherto unaccountably concealed from her—namely, the extent of his regard for Rosamund.

Elinor knew of his visits to the cottage, and was no stranger to the persons of Margaret and her grandaughter. She had several times met them, when she had been walking with her brother—a civility usually passed on either side—but Elinor avoided troubling her brother with any unseasonable questions.

Allan's heart often beat, and he has been going to tell his sister *all*—but something like shame (false or true, I shall not stay to enquire) had hitherto kept him back—still the secret, unrevealed, hung upon his conscience like a crime—for his temper had a sweet and noble frankness in it, which bespake him yet a virgin from the world.

There was a fine openness in his countenance—the character of it somewhat resembled Rosamund's—except that more fire and enthusiasm were discernible in Allan's—his eyes were of a darker blue than Rosamund's—his hair

was of a chestnut colour—his cheeks ruddy, and tinged with brown. There was a cordial sweetness in Allan's smile, the like to which I never saw in any other face.

Elinor had hitherto connived at her brother's attachment to Rosamund. Elinor, I believe, was something of a physiognomist, and thought she could trace in the countenance and manner of Rosamund qualities, which no brother of her's need be ashamed to love.

The time was now come, when Elinor was desirous of knowing her brother's favorite more intimately—an opportunity offered of breaking the matter to Allan.

The morning of the day, in which he carried his present of fruit and flowers to Rosamund, his sister had observed him more than usually busy in the garden, culling fruit with a nicety of choice not common to him.

She came up to him, unobserved, and, taking him by the arm, enquired, with a questioning smile—'What are you doing, Allan? and who are those peaches designed for?'

'For Rosamund Gray'—he replied—and his heart seemed relieved of a burthen, which had long oppressed it.

'I have a mind to become acquainted with your handsome friend—will you introduce me, Allan? I think I should like to go and see her this afternoon.'

'Do go, do go, Elinor—you don't know what a good creature she is—and old blind Margaret, you will like *her* very much.'

His sister promised to accompany him after dinner; and they parted. Allan gathered no more peaches, but hastily cropping a few roses to fling into his basket, went away with it half filled, being impatient to announce to Rosamund the coming of her promised visitor.

CHAPTER V

When Allan returned home, he found an invitation had been left for him, in his absence, to spend that evening with a young friend, who had just quitted a public school in London, and was come to pass one night in his father's house at Widford, previous to his departure the next morning for Edinburgh University.

It was Allan's bosom friend—they had not met for some months—and it was probable, a much longer time must intervene, before they should meet again.

Yet Allan could not help looking a little blank, when he first heard of the invitation. This was to have been an important evening. But Elinor soon relieved her brother, by expressing her readiness to go alone to the cottage.

'I will not lose the pleasure I promised myself, whatever you may determine upon, Allan—I will go by myself rather than be disappointed.'

'Will you, will you, Elinor?'

Elinor promised to go—and I believe, Allan, on a second thought, was not very sorry to be spared the aukwardness of introducing two persons to each other, both so dear to him, but either of whom might happen not much to fancy the other.

At times, indeed, he was confident that Elinor *must* love Rosamund, and Rosamund *must* love Elinor—but there were also times in which he felt misgivings—it was an event he could scarce hope for very joy!

Allan's *real presence* that evening was more at the cottage than at the house, where his *bodily semblance* was visiting—his friend could not help complaining of a certain absence of mind, a *coldness* he called it.

It might have been expected, and in the course of things predicted, that Allan would have asked his friend some questions of what had happened since their last meeting, what his feelings were on leaving school, the probable time when they should meet again, and a hundred natural questions which friendship is most lavish of at such times; but nothing of all this ever occurred to Allan—they did not even settle the method of their future correspondence.

The consequence was, as might have been expected, Allan's friend thought him much altered, and, after his departure, sat down to compose a doleful sonnet about a 'faithless friend'.—I do not find that he ever finished it—indignation, or a dearth of rhymes, causing him to break off in the middle.

CHAPTER VI

In my catalogue of the little library at the cottage, I forgot to mention a book of Common Prayer. My reader's fancy might easily have supplied the omission—old ladies of Margaret's stamp (God bless them) may as well be without their spectacles, or their elbow chair, as their prayer book—I love them for it.

Margaret's was a handsome octavo, printed by Baskerville, the binding red, and fortified with silver at the edges. Out of this book it was their custom every afternoon to read the proper psalms appointed for the day.

The way they managed was this: they took verse by verse—Rosamund *read* her little portion, and Margaret repeated hers, in turn, from memory—for Margaret could say all the Psalter by heart, and a good part of the Bible besides. She would not unfrequently put the girl right when she stumbled or skipped. This Margaret imputed to giddiness—a quality which Rosamund was by no means remarkable for—but old ladies, like Margaret, are not in all instances alike discriminative.

They had been employed in this manner just before Miss Clare arrived at the cottage. The psalm they had been reading was the hundred and fourth—Margaret was naturally led by it into a discussion of the works of creation.

There had been *thunder* in the course of the day—an occasion of instruction which the old lady never let pass—she began—

'Thunder has a very awful sound—some say, God Almighty is angry whenever it thunders—that it is the voice of God speaking to us—for my part, I am not afraid of it'—

And in this manner the old lady was going on to particularise, as usual, its beneficial effects, in clearing the air, destroying of vermin, &c. when the entrance of Miss Clare put an end to her discourse.

Rosamund received her with respectful tenderness—and, taking her grandmother by the hand, said, with great sweetness, 'Miss Clare is come to see you, grandmother.'

'I beg pardon, lady—I cannot *see* you—but you are

heartily welcome—is your brother with you, Miss Clare ? I don't hear him.'—

'He could not come, madam, but he sends his love by me.'

'You have an excellent brother, Miss Clare—but pray do us the honor to take some refreshment—Rosamund '—

And the old lady was going to give directions for a bottle of her currant wine—when Elinor, smiling, said 'she was come to [1]take a cup of tea with her, and expected to find no ceremony '.

'After tea, I promise myself a walk with *you*, Rosamund, if your grandmother can spare you.'—Rosamund looked at her grandmother.

'O, for that matter, I should be sorry to debar the girl from any pleasure—I am sure it 's lonesome enough for her to be with *me* always—and if Miss Clare will take you out, child, I shall do very well by myself till you return—it will not be the first time, you know, that I have been left here alone—some of the neighbours will be dropping in bye and bye—or, if *not*, I shall take no harm.'

Rosamund had all the simple manners of a child—she kissed her grandmother, and looked happy.

All tea-time the old lady's discourse was little more than a panegyric on young Clare's good qualities. Elinor looked at her young friend, and smiled. Rosamund was beginning to look grave—but there was a cordial sunshine in the face of Elinor, before which any clouds of reserve, that had been gathering on Rosamund's soon brake away.

'Does your grandmother ever go out, Rosamund ? '

Margaret prevented the girl's reply, by saying—' my dear young lady, I am an old woman, and very infirm—Rosamund takes me a few paces beyond the door sometimes—but I walk very badly—I love best to sit in our little arbour, when the sun shines—I can yet feel it warm and cheerful—and, [2]if I lose the beauties of the season, I shall be very happy if you and Rosamund can take delight in this fine summer evening.'

'I shall want to rob you of Rosamund's company now and

[1] take a cup] drink a dish 1798. [2] if I lose the beauties of the season, I can still remember them with pleasure, and rejoice that younger eyes than mine can see and enjoy them—I shall be very happy . . . 1798.

then, if we like one another. I had hoped to have seen *you*, madam, at our house. I don't know whether we could not make room for you to come and live with us—what say you to it ?—Allan would be proud to tend you, I am sure ; and Rosamund and I should be nice company.'

Margaret was all unused to such kindnesses, and wept—Margaret had a great spirit—yet she was not above accepting an obligation from a worthy person—there was a delicacy in Miss Clare's manner—she could have no interest, but pure goodness, to induce her to make the offer—at length the old lady spake from a full heart.

' Miss Clare, this little cottage received us in our distress—it gave us shelter when we had *no home*—we have praised God in it—and, while life remains, I think I shall never part from it—Rosamund does every thing for me—'

' And will do, grandmother, as long as I live ; '—and then Rosamund fell a crying.

' You are a good girl, Rosamund, and if you do but find friends when I am dead and gone, I shall want no better accommodation while I live—but, God bless you, lady, a thousand times, for your kind offer.'

Elinor was moved to tears, and, affecting a sprightliness, bade Rosamund prepare for her walk. The girl put on her white silk bonnet ; and Elinor thought she never beheld so lovely a creature.

They took leave of Margaret, and walked out together—they rambled over all Rosamund's favourite haunts—through many a sunny field—by secret glade or woodwalk, where the girl had wandered so often with her beloved Clare.

Who now so happy as Rosamund ? She had oft-times heard Allan speak with great tenderness of his sister—she was now rambling, arm in arm, with that very sister, the ' vaunted sister ' of her friend, her beloved Clare.

Not a tree, not a bush, scarce a wild flower in their path, but revived in Rosamund some tender recollection, a conversation perhaps, or some chaste endearment. Life, and a new scene of things, were now opening before her—she was got into a fairy land of uncertain existence.

Rosamund was too happy to talk much—but Elinor was delighted with her when she *did* talk :—the girl's remarks were suggested, most of them, by the passing scene—and

they betrayed, all of them, the liveliness of present impulse : —her conversation did not consist in a comparison of vapid feeling, an interchange of sentiment lip-deep—it had all the freshness of young sensation in it.

Sometimes they talked of Allan.

'Allan is very good,' said Rosamund, 'very good *indeed* to my grandmother—he will sit with her, and hear her stories, and read to her, and try to divert her a hundred ways. I wonder sometimes he is not tired. She talks him to death!'

'Then you confess, Rosamund, that the old lady *does* tire *you* sometimes.'

'O no, I did not mean *that*—it 's very different—I am used to all her ways, and I can humour her, and please her, and I ought to do it, for she is the only friend I ever had in the world.'

The new friends did not conclude their walk till it was late, and Rosamund began to be apprehensive about the old lady, who had been all this time alone.

On their return to the cottage, they found that Margaret had been somewhat impatient—old ladies, *good old ladies*, will be so at times—age is timorous and suspicious of danger, where no danger is.

Besides, it was Margaret's bed-time, for she kept very good hours—indeed, in the distribution of her meals, and sundry other particulars, she resembled the livers in the antique world, more than might well beseem [1]a creature of this.

So the new friends parted for that night—Elinor having made Margaret promise to give Rosamund leave to come and see her the next day.

CHAPTER VII

Miss Clare, we may be sure, made her brother very happy, when she told him of the engagement she had made for the morrow, and how delighted she had been with his handsome friend.

[1] a creature of this.] a creature of this—none but Rosamund could get her mess of broth ready, or put her night caps on—(she wore seven, the undermost was of flannel)—

'You know, love, I can do nothing to help myself—here I must stay till you return.' 1798.

Allan, I believe, got little sleep that night. I know not, whether joy be not a more troublesome bed-fellow than grief—hope keeps a body very wakeful, I know.

Elinor Clare was the best good creature—the least selfish human being I ever knew—always at work for other people's good, planning other people's happiness—continually forgetful to consult for her own personal gratifications, except indirectly, in the welfare of another—while her parents lived, the most attentive of daughters—since they died, the kindest of sisters—I never knew but *one* like her.

It happens that I have some of this young lady's *letters* in my possession—I shall present my reader with one of them. It was written a short time after the death of her mother, and addressed to a cousin, a dear friend of Elinor's, who was then on the point of being married to Mr. Beaumont, of Staffordshire, and had invited Elinor to assist at her nuptials. I will transcribe it with minute fidelity.

Elinor Clare to Maria Leslie

Widford, July the —, 17—.

Health, Innocence, and Beauty, shall be thy bride-maids, my sweet cousin. I have no heart to undertake the office. Alas! what have I to do in the house of feasting?

Maria! I fear lest my griefs should prove obtrusive. Yet bear with me a little—I have recovered already a share of my former spirits.

I fear more for Allan than myself. The loss of two such parents, with so short an interval, bears very heavy on him. The boy *hangs* about me from morning till night. He is perpetually forcing a smile into his poor pale cheeks—you know the sweetness of his smile, Maria.

To-day, after dinner, when he took his glass of wine in his hand, he burst into tears, and would not, or could not then, tell me the reason—afterwards he told me—' he had been used to drink Mamma's health after dinner, and *that* came in his head and made him cry.' I feel the claims the boy has upon me—I perceive that I am living to *some end*—and the thought supports me.

Already I have attained to a state of complacent feelings

—my mother's lessons were not thrown away upon her Elinor.

In the visions of last night her spirit seemed to stand at my bedside—a light, as of noon day, shone upon the room —she opened my curtains—she smiled upon me with the same placid smile as in her life-time. I felt no fear. 'Elinor,' she said, 'for my sake take care of young Allan,'—and I awoke with calm feelings.

Maria! shall not the meeting of blessed spirits, think you, be something like this?—I think, I could even now behold my mother without dread—I would ask pardon of her for all my past omissions of duty, for all the little asperities in my temper, which have so often grieved her gentle spirit when living. Maria! I think she would not turn away from me.

Oftentimes a feeling, more vivid than memory, brings her before me—I see her sit in her old elbow chair—her arms folded upon her lap—a tear upon her cheek, that seems to upbraid her unkind daughter for some inattention—I wipe it away and kiss her honored lips.

Maria! when I have been fancying all this, Allan will come in, with his poor eyes red with weeping, and taking me by the hand, destroy the vision in a moment.

I am prating to you, my sweet cousin, but it is the prattle of the heart, which Maria loves. Besides, whom have I to talk to of these things but you—you have been my counsellor in times past, my companion, and sweet familiar friend. Bear with me a little—I mourn the 'cherishers of my infancy'.

I sometimes count it a blessing, that my father did not prove the *survivor*. You know something of his story. You know there was a foul tale current—it was the busy malice of that bad man, S——, which helped to spread it abroad—you will recollect the active good nature of our friends W—— and T——; what pains they took to undeceive people—with the better sort their kind labours prevailed; but there was still a party who shut their ears. You know the issue of it. My father's great spirit bore up against it for some time—my father never was a *bad* man—but that spirit was broken at last—and the greatly-injured man was forced to leave his old paternal dwelling in Stafford-

shire—for the neighbours had begun to point at him.—Maria ! I have *seen* them *point* at him, and have been ready to drop.

In this part of the country, where the slander had not reached, he sought a retreat—and he found a still more grateful asylum in the daily solicitudes of the best of wives.

' An enemy hath done this ', I have heard him say—and at such times my mother would speak to him so soothingly of forgiveness, and long-suffering, and the bearing of injuries with patience ; would heal all his wounds with so gentle a touch ;—I have seen the old man weep like a child.

The gloom that beset his mind, at times betrayed him into scepticism—he has doubted if there be a Providence ! I have heard him say, ' God has built a brave world, but methinks he has left his creatures to bustle in it *how they may*.'

At such times he could not endure to hear my mother talk in a religious strain. He would say, ' Woman, have done—you confound, you perplex me, when you talk of these matters, and for one day at least unfit me for the business of life.'

I have seen her look at him—O God, Maria ! such a *look !* it plainly spake that she was willing to have shared her precious hope with the partner of her earthly cares—but she found a repulse—

Deprived of such a wife, think you, the old man could have long endured his existence ? or what consolation would his wretched daughter have had to offer him, but silent and imbecile tears ?

My sweet cousin, you will think me tedious—and I am so—but it does me good to talk these matters over. And do not you be alarmed for me—my sorrows are subsiding into a deep and sweet resignation. I shall soon be sufficiently composed, I know it, to participate in my friend's happiness.

Let me call her, while yet I may, my own Maria Leslie ! Methinks I shall not like you by any other name. Beaumont! Maria Beaumont ! it hath a strange sound with it—I shall never be reconciled to this name—but do not you fear—Maria Leslie shall plead with me for Maria Beaumont.

And now, my sweet Friend,

God love you, and your

Elinor Clare.

I find in my collection several letters, written soon after the date of the preceding, and addressed all of them to Maria Beaumont.—I am tempted to make some short extracts from these—my tale will suffer interruption by them —but I was willing to preserve whatever memorials I could of Elinor Clare.

From Elinor Clare to Maria Beaumont

(AN EXTRACT)

——' I HAVE been strolling out for half an hour in the fields ; and my mind has been occupied by thoughts, which Maria has a right to participate. I have been bringing my *mother* to my recollection. My heart ached with the remembrance of infirmities, that made her closing years of life so sore a trial to her.

I was concerned to think, that our family differences have been one source of disquiet to her. I am sensible that *this last* we are apt to exaggerate after a person's death—and surely, in the main, there was considerable harmony among the members of our little family—still I was concerned to think, that we ever gave her gentle spirit disquiet.

I thought on years back—on all my parents' friends—the H——s, the F——s, on D—— S——, and on many a merry evening, in the fire-side circle, in that comfortable back parlour—it is never used now.—

O ye *Matravises*[a] of the age, ye know not what ye lose, in despising these petty topics of endeared remembrance, associated circumstances of past times ;—ye know not the throbbings of the heart, tender yet affectionately familiar, which accompany the dear and honored names of *father* or of *mother*.

Maria ! I thought on all these things ; my heart ached at the review of them—it yet aches, while I write this—but I am never so satisfied with my train of thoughts, as when they run upon these subjects—the tears, they draw from us, meliorate and soften the heart, and keep fresh within us that memory of dear friends dead, which alone can fit us for a re-admission to their society hereafter.'

[a] This name will be explained presently.

(*From another Letter*)

——'I HAD a bad dream this morning—that Allan was dead—and who, of all persons in the world, do you think, put on mourning for him? Why, *Matravis*.—This alone might cure me of superstitious thoughts, if I were inclined to them; for why should Matravis *mourn* for us, or our family?—*Still* it was pleasant to awake, and find it but a dream.—Methinks something like an awaking from an ill dream shall the Resurrection from the Dead be.—Materially different from our accustomed scenes, and ways of life, the *World to come* may possibly not be—still it is represented to us under the notion of a *Rest*, a *Sabbath*, a state of [1]bliss.'

(*From another Letter*)

——'METHINKS, you and I should have been born under the same roof, sucked the same milk, conned the same horn-book, thumbed the same Testament, together:—for we have been more than sisters, Maria!

Something will still be whispering to me, that I shall one day be inmate of the same dwelling with my cousin, partaker with her in all the delights, which spring from mutual good offices, kind words, attentions in sickness and in health,—conversation, sometimes innocently trivial, and at others profitably serious;—books read, and commented on, together; meals ate, and walks taken, together,—and conferences, how we may best do good to this poor person or that, and wean our spirits from the world's *cares*, without divesting ourselves of its *charities*. What a picture I have drawn, Maria!—and none of all these things may ever come to pass.'

(*From another Letter*)

——'CONTINUE to write to me, my sweet cousin. Many good thoughts, resolutions, and proper views of things, pass through the mind in the course of the day, but are lost for want of committing them to paper. Seize them, Maria, as they pass, these Birds of Paradise, that show themselves and

[1] bliss.] Bliss not to be conceived. 1798.

are gone,—and make a grateful present of the precious fugitives to your friend.

To use a homely illustration, just rising in my fancy,—shall the good housewife take such pains in pickling and preserving her worthless fruits, her walnuts, her apricots, and quinces—and is there not much *spiritual housewifery* in treasuring up our mind's best fruits,—our heart's meditations in its most favored moments ?

This said simile is much in the fashion of the old Moralizers such as I conceive honest Baxter to have been, such as Quarles and Wither were, with their curious, serio-comic, quaint emblems. But they sometimes reach the heart, when a more elegant simile rests in the fancy.

Not low and mean, like these, but beautifully familiarized to our conceptions, and condescending to human thoughts and notions, are all the discourses of our LORD—conveyed in parable, or similitude, what easy access do they win to the heart, through the medium of the delighted imagination ! speaking of heavenly things in fable, or in simile, drawn from earth, from objects *common, accustomed.*

Life's business, with such delicious little interruptions as our correspondence affords, how pleasant it is !—why can we not paint on the dull paper our whole feelings, exquisite as they rise up ? '

(*From another Letter*)

——' I HAD meant to have left off at this place ; but, looking back, I am sorry to find too gloomy a cast tincturing my last page—a representation of life false and unthankful. Life is *not* all vanity and disappointment—it hath much of evil in it, no doubt ; but to those who do not misuse it, it affords comfort, *temporary* comfort, much—much that endears us to it, and dignifies it—many true and good feelings, I trust, of which we need not be ashamed—hours of tranquillity and hope.—But the morning was dull and overcast, and my spirits were under a cloud. I feel my error.

Is it no blessing, that we two love one another so dearly—that Allan is left me—that you are settled in life—that worldly affairs go smooth with us both—above all, that our lot hath fallen to us in a Christian country ? Maria ! these

things are not little. I will consider life as a long feast, and not forget to say grace.'

(*From another Letter*)

——' Allan has written to me—you know, he is on a visit at his old tutor's in Gloucestershire—he is to return home on Thursday—Allan is a dear boy—he concludes his letter, which is very affectionate throughout, in this manner—

" Elinor, I charge you to learn the following stanza by heart—

> The monarch may forget his crown,
> That on his head an hour hath been;
> The bridegroom may forget his bride
> Was made his wedded wife yestreen;
> The mother may forget her child,
> That smiles so sweetly on her knee:
> But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
> And all that thou hast done for me.

" The lines are in Burns—you know, we read him for the first time together at Margate—and I have been used to refer them to you, and to call you, in my mind, *Glencairn*—for you were always very, very good to me. I had a thousand failings, but you would love me in spite of them all. I am going to drink your health." '

I shall detain my reader no longer from the narrative.

CHAPTER VIII

They had but four rooms in the cottage. Margaret slept in the biggest room up stairs, and her grandaughter in a kind of closet adjoining, where she could be within hearing, if her grandmother should call her in the night.

The girl was often disturbed in that manner—two or three times in a night she has been forced to leave her bed, to fetch her grandmother's cordials, or do some little service for her—but she knew that Margaret's ailings were *real* and pressing, and Rosamund never complained—never suspected, that her grandmother's requisitions had any thing unreasonable in them.

The night she parted with Miss Clare, she had helped Margaret to bed, as usual—and, after saying her prayers, as the custom was, kneeling by the old lady's bed-side, kissed her grandmother, and wished her a good night—Margaret blessed her, and charged her to go to bed directly. It was her customary injunction, and Rosamund had never dreamed of disobeying.

So she retired to her little room. The night was warm and clear—the moon very bright—her window commanded a view of *scenes* she had been tracing in the day-time with Miss Clare.

All the events of the day past, the occurrences of their walk, arose in her mind. She fancied she should like to retrace those scenes—but it was now nine o'clock, a late hour in the village.

Still she fancied it would be very charming—and then her grandmother's injunction came powerfully to her recollection—she sighed, and turned from the window—and walked up and down her little room.

Ever, when she looked at the window, the wish returned. It was not so *very late*. The neighbours were yet about, passing under the window to their homes—she thought, and thought again, till her sensations became vivid, even to painfulness—her bosom was aching to give them vent.

The village clock struck ten !—the neighbours ceased to pass under the window. Rosamund, stealing down stairs, fastened the latch behind her, and left the cottage.

One, that knew her, met her, and observed her with some surprize. Another recollects having wished her a good night. Rosamund never returned to the cottage !

An old man, that lay sick in a small house adjoining to Margaret's, testified the next morning, that he had plainly heard the old creature calling for her grandaughter. All the night long she made her moan, and ceased not to call upon the name of Rosamund. But no Rosamund was there—the voice died away, but not till near day-break.

When the neighbours came to search in the morning, Margaret was missing ! She had *straggled* out of bed, and made her way into Rosamund's room—worn out with fatigue and fright, when she found the girl not there, she had laid herself down to die—and, it is thought, she died

praying—for she was discovered in a kneeling posture, her arms and face extended on the pillow, where Rosamund had slept the night before—a smile was on her face in death.

CHAPTER IX

FAIN would I draw a veil over the transactions of that night—but I cannot—grief, and burning shame, forbid me to be silent—black deeds are about to be made public, which reflect a stain upon our common nature.

Rosamund, enthusiastic and improvident, wandered unprotected to a distance from her guardian doors—through lonely glens, and wood walks, where she had rambled many a *day* in safety—till she arrived at a shady copse, out of the hearing of any human habitation.

Matravis met her.——'Flown with insolence and wine,' returning home late at night, he passed that way!

Matravis was a very ugly man. Sallow-complexioned! and, if hearts can wear that colour, his heart was sallow-complexioned also.

A young man with *gray* deliberation! cold and systematic in all his plans; and all his plans were evil. His very lust was systematic.

He would brood over his bad purposes for such a dreary length of time, that it might have been expected, some solitary check of conscience must have intervened to save him from commission. But that *Light from Heaven* was extinct in his dark bosom.

Nothing that is great, nothing that is amiable, existed for this unhappy man. He feared, he envied, he suspected; but he never loved. The sublime and beautiful in nature, the excellent and becoming in morals, were things placed beyond the capacity of his sensations. He loved not poetry—nor ever took a lonely walk to meditate—never beheld virtue, which he did not try to disbelieve, or female beauty and innocence, which he did not lust to contaminate.

A sneer was perpetually upon his face, and malice *grinning* at his heart. He would say the most ill-natured things, with the least remorse, of any man I ever knew. This

gained him the reputation of a wit—other *traits* got him the reputation of a villain.

And this man formerly paid his court to Elinor Clare !—with what success I leave my readers to determine.—It was not in Elinor's nature to despise any living thing—but in the estimation of this man, to be rejected was to be *despised* —and Matravis *never forgave*.

He had long turned his eyes upon Rosamund Gray. To steal from the bosom of her friends the jewel they prized so much, the little ewe lamb they held so dear, [1]was a scheme of delicate revenge, and Matravis had a two-fold motive for accomplishing this young maid's ruin.

Often had he met her in her favorite solitudes, but found her ever cold and inaccessible. Of late the girl had avoided straying far from her own home, in the fear of meeting him—but she had never told her fears to Allan.

Matravis had, till now, been content to be a villain within the limits of the law—but, on the present occasion, hot fumes of wine, co-operating with his deep desire of revenge, and the insolence of an [2]unhoped for meeting, overcame his customary prudence, and Matravis rose, at once, to an audacity of glorious mischief.

Late at night he met her, a lonely, unprotected, virgin—no friend at hand—no place near of refuge.

Rosamund Gray, my soul is exceeding sorrowful for thee—I loath to tell the hateful circumstances of thy wrongs. Night and silence were the only witnesses of this young maid's disgrace—Matravis fled.

Rosamund, polluted and disgraced, wandered, an abandoned thing, about the fields and meadows till day-break. Not caring to return to the cottage, she sat herself down before the gate of Miss Clare's house—in a stupor of grief.

Elinor was just rising, and had opened the windows of her chamber, when she perceived her desolate young friend. —She ran to embrace her—she brought her into the house—she took her to her bosom—she kissed her—she spake to her ; but Rosamund could not speak.

Tidings came from the cottage. Margaret's death was an event, which could not be kept concealed from Rosa-

[1] was] it was 1798. [2] unhoped for] unhoped 1798.

mund. When the sweet maid heard of it, she languished, and fell sick—she never held up her head after that time.

If Rosamund had been a *sister*, she could not have been kindlier treated, than by her two friends.

Allan had prospects in life—might, in time, have married into any of the first families in Hertfordshire—but Rosamund Gray, humbled though she was, and put to shame, had yet a charm for *him*—and he would have been content to share his fortunes with her yet, if Rosamund would have lived to be his companion.

But this was not to be—and the girl soon after died. She expired in the arms of Elinor—quiet, gentle, as she lived—thankful, that she died not among strangers—and expressing by signs, rather than words, a gratitude for the most trifling services, the common offices of humanity. She died uncomplaining ; and this young maid, this untaught Rosamund, might have given a lesson to the grave philosopher in death.

CHAPTER X

I WAS but a boy when these events took place. All the village remember the story, and tell of Rosamund Gray, and old blind Margaret.

I parted from Allan Clare on that disastrous night, and set out for Edinburgh the next morning, before the facts were commonly known—I heard not of them—and it was four months before I received a letter from Allan.

' His heart ' he told me ' was gone from him—for his sister had died of a phrensy fever ! '—not a word of Rosamund in the letter—I was left to collect her story from sources which may one day be explained.

I soon after quitted Scotland, on the death of my father, and returned to my native village. Allan had left the place, and I could gain no information, whether he were dead or living.

I passed the *cottage*. I did not dare to look that way, or to enquire *who* lived there.—A little dog, that had been Rosamund's, was yelping in my path. I laughed aloud like one mad, whose mind had suddenly gone from him—I

stared vacantly around me, like one alienated from common perceptions.

But I was young at that time, and the impression became gradually weakened, as I mingled in the business of life. It is now *ten years* since these events took place, and I sometimes think of them as unreal. Allan Clare was a dear friend to me—but there are times, when Allan and his sister, Margaret and her grandaughter, appear like personages of a dream—an idle dream.

CHAPTER XI

Strange things have happened unto me—I seem scarce awake—but I will recollect my thoughts, and try to give an account of what [1]has befallen me in the few last weeks.

Since my father's death our family have resided in London. I am in practice as a surgeon there. My mother died two years after we left Widford.

A month or two ago I had been busying myself in drawing up the above narrative, intending to make it public. The employment had forced my mind to dwell upon *facts*, which had begun to fade from it—the memory of old times became vivid, and more vivid—I felt a strong desire to revisit the scenes of my native village—of the young loves of Rosamund and her Clare.

A kind of dread had hitherto kept me back ; but I was restless now, till I had accomplished my wish. I set out one morning to walk—I reached Widford about eleven in the forenoon—after a slight breakfast at my inn—where I was mortified to perceive, the old landlord did not know me again—(old Thomas Billet—he has often made angle rods for me when a child)—I rambled over all my accustomed haunts.

Our old house was vacant, and to be sold. I entered, unmolested, into the room that had been my bed-chamber. I kneeled down on the spot where my little bed had stood—I felt like a child—I prayed like one—it seemed as though old times were to return again—I looked round involuntarily, expecting to see some face I knew—but all was

[1] has] hath 1798.

naked and mute. The bed was gone. My little pane of painted window, through which I loved to look at the sun, when I awoke in a fine summer's morning, was taken out, and had been replaced by one of common glass.

I visited, by turns, every chamber—they were all desolate and unfurnished, one excepted, in which the owner had left a harpsichord, probably to be sold—I touched the keys —I played some old Scottish tunes, which had delighted me when a child. Past associations revived with the music—blended with a sense of *unreality*, which at last became too powerful—I rushed out of the room to give vent to my feelings.

I wandered, scarce knowing where, into an old wood, that stands at the back of the house—we called it the *Wilderness*. A well-known *form* was missing, that used to meet me in this place—it was thine, Ben Moxam—the kindest, gentlest, politest, of human beings, yet was he nothing higher than a gardener in the family. Honest creature, thou didst never pass me in my childish rambles, without a soft speech, and a smile. I remember thy good-natured face. But there is one thing, for which I can never forgive thee, Ben Moxam—that thou didst join with an old maiden aunt of mine in a cruel plot, to lop away the hanging branches of the old fir trees.—I remember them sweeping to the ground.

I have often left my childish sports to ramble in this place—its glooms and its solitude had a mysterious charm for my young mind, nurturing within me that love of quietness and lonely thinking, which have accompanied me to maturer years.

In this *Wilderness* I found myself after a ten years' absence. Its stately fir trees were yet standing, with all their luxuriant company of underwood—the squirrel was there, and the melancholy cooings of the wood-pigeon—all was as I had left it—my heart softened at the sight—it seemed, as though my character had been suffering a *change*, since I forsook these shades.

My parents were both dead—I had no counsellor left, no experience of age to direct me, no sweet voice of reproof. The Lord had taken away my *friends*, and I knew not where he had laid them. I paced round the wilderness, seeking

a comforter. I prayed, that I might be restored to that *state of innocence*, in which I had wandered in those shades.

Methought, my request was heard—for it seemed as though the stains of manhood were passing from me, and I were relapsing into the purity and simplicity of childhood. I was content to have been moulded into a perfect child. I stood still, as in a trance. I dreamed that I was enjoying a personal intercourse with my heavenly Father—and, extravagantly, put off the shoes from my feet—for the place where I stood, I thought, was holy ground.

This state of mind could not last long—and I returned with languid feelings to my Inn. I ordered my dinner—green peas and a sweetbread—it had been a favourite dish with me in my childhood—I was allowed to have it on my birth days. I was impatient to see it come upon table—but, when it came, I could scarce eat a mouthful—my tears choaked me. I called for wine—I drank a pint and a half of red wine—and not till then had I dared to visit the church-yard, where my parents were interred.

The *cottage* lay in my way—Margaret had chosen it for that very reason, to be near the church—for the old lady was regular in her attendance on public worship—I passed on—and in a moment found myself among the tombs.

I had been present at my father's burial, and knew the spot again—my mother's funeral I was prevented by illness from attending—a plain stone was placed over the grave, with their initials carved upon it—for they both occupied one grave.

I prostrated myself before the spot—I kissed the earth that covered them—I contemplated, with gloomy delight, the time when I should mingle my dust with their's—and kneeled, with my arms incumbent on the grave-stone, in a kind of mental prayer—for I could not speak.

Having performed these duties, I arose with quieter feelings, and felt leisure to attend to indifferent objects.—Still I continued in the church-yard, reading the various inscriptions, and moralizing on them with that kind of levity, which will not unfrequently spring up in the mind, in the midst of deep melancholy.

I read of nothing but careful parents, loving husbands, and dutiful children. I said jestingly, where be all the *bad*

people buried ? Bad parents, bad husbands, bad children—what cemeteries are appointed for these ? do they not sleep in consecrated ground ? or is it but a pious fiction, a generous oversight, in the survivors, which thus tricks out men's epitaphs when dead, who, in their life-time, discharged the offices of life, perhaps, but lamely ?—Their failings, with their reproaches, now sleep with them in the grave. *Man wars not with the dead.* It is a *trait* of human nature, for which I love it.

I had not observed, till now, a little group assembled at the other end of the church-yard ; it was a company of children, who were gathered round a young man, dressed in black, sitting on a gravestone.

He seemed to be asking them questions—probably, about their learning—and one little dirty ragged-headed fellow was clambering up his knees to kiss him.—The children had been eating black cherries—for some of the stones were scattered about, and their mouths were smeared with them.

As I drew near them, I thought I discerned in the stranger a mild benignity of countenance, which I had somewhere seen before—I gazed at him more attentively—

It was Allan Clare ! sitting on the grave of his sister.

I threw my arms about his neck. I exclaimed ' Allan '—he turned his eyes upon me—he knew me—we both wept aloud—it seemed, as though the interval, since we parted, had been as nothing—I cried out, ' come, and tell me about these things.'

I drew him away from his little friends—he parted with a show of reluctance from the church-yard—Margaret and her grandaughter lay buried there, as well as his sister—I took him to my Inn—secured a room, where we might be private—ordered fresh wine—scarce knowing what I did, I danced for joy.

Allan was quite overcome, and taking me by the hand he said, ' this repays me for all.'

It was a proud day for me—I had found the friend I thought dead—earth seemed to me no longer valuable, than as it contained *him* ; and existence a blessing no longer than while I should live to be his comforter.

I began, at leisure, to survey him with more attention. Time and grief had left few traces of that fine *enthusiasm,*

which once burned in his countenance—his eyes had lost their original fire, but they retained an uncommon sweetness and, whenever they were turned upon me, their smile pierced to my heart.

'Allan, I fear you have been a sufferer.' He replied not, and I could not press him further. I could not call the dead to life again.

So we drank, and told old stories—and repeated old poetry—and sang old songs—as if nothing had happened.—We sat till very late—I forgot that I had purposed returning to town that evening—to Allan all places were alike—I grew noisy, he grew cheerful—Allan's old manners, old enthusiasm, were returning upon him—we laughed, we wept, we mingled our tears, and talked extravagantly.

Allan was my [1]chamber-fellow that night—and lay awake, planning schemes of living together under the same roof, entering upon similar pursuits;—and praising GOD, that we had met.

I was obliged to return to town the next morning, and Allan proposed to accompany me.—'Since the death of his sister,' he told me, 'he had been a wanderer.'

In the course of our walk he unbosomed himself without reserve—told me many particulars of his way of life for the last nine or ten years, which I do not feel myself at liberty to divulge.

Once, on my attempting to cheer him, when I perceived him over thoughtful, he replied to me in these words:—

'Do not regard me as unhappy, when you catch me in these moods. I am never more happy than at times, when, by the cast of my countenance, men judge me most miserable.

'My friend, the events, which have left this sadness behind them, are of no recent date. The melancholy, which comes over me with the recollection of them, is not hurtful, but only tends to soften and tranquillize my mind, to detach me from the restlessness of human pursuits.

'The stronger I feel this detachment, the more I find myself drawn heavenward to the contemplation of spiritual objects.

[1] chamber-fellow that night—and lay] bed-fellow that night—and we lay 1798.

'I love to keep old friendships alive and warm within me, because I expect a renewal of them in the *World of Spirits*.

'I am a wandering and unconnected thing on the earth. I have made no new friendships, that can compensate me for the loss of the old—and the more I know mankind, the more does it become necessary for me to supply their loss by little images, recollections, and circumstances, of past pleasures.

'I am sensible that I am surrounded by a multitude of very worthy people, plain-hearted souls, sincere, and kind. —But they have hitherto eluded my pursuit, and will continue to bless the little circle of their families and friends, while I must remain a stranger to them.

'Kept at a distance by mankind, I have not ceased to love them—and could I find the cruel persecutor, the malignant instrument of GOD'S judgments on me and mine, I think I would forgive, and try to love him too.

'I have been a quiet sufferer. From the beginning of my calamities, it was given to me not to see the hand of man in them. I perceived a mighty arm, which none but myself could see, extended over me. I gave my heart to the Purifier, and my will to the Sovereign Will of the Universe. The irresistible wheels of destiny passed on in their everlasting rotation,—and I suffered myself to be carried along with them without complaining.'

CHAPTER XII

ALLAN told me, that for some years past, feeling himself disengaged from every personal tye, but not alienated from human sympathies, it had been his taste, his *humour* he called it, to spend a great portion of his time in *hospitals* and *lazar houses*.

He had found a *wayward pleasure*, he refused to name it a virtue, in tending a description of people, who had long ceased to expect kindness or friendliness from mankind, but were content to accept the reluctant services, which the oftentimes unfeeling instruments and servants of these well-meant institutions deal out to the poor sick people under their care.

It is not medicine, it is not broths and coarse meats, served up at a stated hour with all the hard formalities of a prison,—it is not the scanty dole of a bed to die on—which dying man requires from his species.

Looks, attentions, consolations,—in a word, *sympathies*, are what a man most needs in this awful close of mortal sufferings. A kind look, a smile, a drop of cold water to the parched lip—for these things a man shall bless you in death.

And these better things than cordials did Allan love to administer—to stay by a bed-side the whole day, when something disgusting in a patient's distemper has kept the very nurses at a distance—to sit by, while the poor wretch got a little sleep—and be there to smile upon him when he awoke—to slip a guinea, now and then, into the hands of a nurse or attendant—these things have been to Allan as *privileges*, for which he was content to live, choice marks, and circumstances, of his Maker's goodness to him.

And I do not know whether occupations of this kind be not a spring of purer and nobler delight (certainly instances of a more disinterested virtue) than [1]arises from what are called Friendships of Sentiment.

Between two persons of liberal education, like opinions, and common feelings, oftentimes subsists a Vanity of Sentiment, which disposes each to look upon the other as the only being in the universe worthy of friendship, or capable of understanding it,—themselves they consider as the solitary receptacles of all that is delicate in feeling, or stable in attachment :—when the odds are, that under every green hill, and in every crowded street, people of equal worth are to be found, who do more good in their generation, and make less noise in the doing of it.

It was in consequence of these benevolent propensities, I have been describing, that Allan oftentimes discovered considerable inclinations in favor of my way of life, which I have before mentioned as being that of a surgeon. He would frequently attend me on my visits to patients ; and I began to think, that he had serious intentions of making my profession his study.

He was present with me at a scene—a *death-bed scene*—I shudder when I do but think of it.

[1] arises] ariseth 1798.

CHAPTER XIII

I WAS sent for the other morning to the assistance of a gentleman, who had been wounded in a duel,—and his wounds by unskilful treatment had been brought to a dangerous crisis.

The uncommonness of the name, which was *Matravis*, suggested to me, that this might possibly be no other than Allan's old enemy. Under this apprehension, I did what I could to dissuade Allan from accompanying me—but he seemed bent upon going, and even pleased himself with the notion, that it might lie within his ability to do the unhappy man some service. So he went with me.

When we came to the house, which was in Soho-Square, we discovered that it was indeed the man—the identical Matravis, who had done all that mischief in times past—but not in a condition to excite any other sensation than pity in a heart more hard than Allan's.

Intense pain had brought on a delirium—we perceived this on first entering the room—for the wretched man was raving to himself—talking idly in mad unconnected sentences,—that yet seemed, at times, to have a reference to *past facts*.

One while he told us his dream. ' He had lost his way on a great heath, to which there seemed no end—it was cold, cold, cold—and dark, very dark—an old woman in leading-strings, *blind*, was groping about for a guide '—and then he frightened me,—for he seemed disposed to be *jocular*, and sang a song about ' an old woman clothed in grey ', and said ' he did not believe in a devil '.

Presently he bid us ' not tell Allan Clare '—Allan was hanging over him at that very moment, sobbing.—I could not resist the impulse, but cried out, ' *this* is Allan Clare—Allan Clare is come to see you, my dear Sir.'—The wretched man did not hear me, I believe, for he turned his head away, and began talking of *charnel houses*, and *dead men*, and ' whether they knew any thing that passed in their coffins '.

Matravis died that night.

CURIOUS FRAGMENTS,

Extracted from a common-place book, which belonged to Robert Burton, the famous Author of The Anatomy of Melancholy

[Composed 1800. Printed in *John Woodvil, a Tragedy. By C. Lamb. To which are added, Fragments of Burton, the Author of the Anatomy of Melancholy.* London: 1802. Reprinted in *Works*, 1818. Text of 1818.]

EXTRACT I

I Democritus Junior have put my finishing pen to a tractate *De Melancholia*, this day December 5, 1620. First, I blesse the Trinity, which hath given me health to prosecute my worthlesse studies thus far, and make supplication, with a *Laus Deo*, if in any case these my poor labours may be found instrumental to weede out black melancholy, carking cares, harte-grief, from the mind of man. *Sed hoc magis volo quam expecto.*

I turn now to my book, *i nunc liber, goe forth, my brave Anatomy, child of my brain-sweat,* and yee, *candidi lectores,* lo! here I give him up to you, even do with him what you please, my masters. Some, I suppose will applaud, commend, cry him up (these are my friends) hee is a *flos rarus,* forsooth, a none-such, a Phœnix, (concerning whom see *Plinius* and *Mandeuille,* though *Fienus de monstris* doubteth at large of such a bird, whom *Montaltus* confuting argueth to have been a man *malæ scrupulositatis,* of a weak and cowardlie faith: *Christopherus a Vega* is with him in this.) Others again will blame, hiss, reprehende in many things, cry down altogether, my collections, for crude, inept, putid, *post cœnam scripta, Coryate could write better upon a full meal,* verbose, inerudite, and not sufficiently abounding in authorities, *dogmata,* sentences of learneder writers which have been before me, when as that first named sort clean otherwise judge of my labours to bee nothing else but a *messe of opinions,* a vortex attracting indiscriminate, gold, pearls, hay, straw, wood, excrement, an exchange, tavern, marte, for foreigners to congregate, Danes, Swedes, Hollanders, Lombards, so many strange faces, dresses, salutations,

languages, all which *Wolfius* behelde with great content upon the Venetian Rialto, as he describes diffusedly in his book the world's Epitome, which *Sannazar* so bepraiseth, *e contra* our Polydore can see nothing in it; they call me singular, a pedant, fantastic, words of reproach in this age, which is all too neoteric and light for my humour.

One cometh to me sighing, complaining. He expected universal remedies in my Anatomy; so many cures as there are distemperatures among men. I have not put his affection in my cases. Hear you his case. My fine Sir is a lover, an *inamorato*, a Pyramus, a Romeo; he walks seven years disconsolate, moping, because he cannot enjoy his miss, *insanus amor* is his melancholy, the man is mad; *delirat*, he dotes; all this while his Glycera is rude, spiteful, not to be entreated, churlish, spits at him, yet exceeding fair, gentle eyes, (which is a beauty,) hair lustrous and *smiling*, the trope is none of mine, *Æneas Sylvius* hath *crines ridentes*— in conclusion she is wedded to his rival, a boore, a *Corydon*, a rustic, *omnino ignarus, he can scarce construe Corderius*, yet haughty, fantastic, *opiniatre*. The lover travels, goes into foreign parts, peregrinates, *amoris ergo*, sees manners, customs, not English, converses with pilgrims, lying travellers, monks, hermits, those cattle, pedlars, travelling gentry, *Egyptians*, natural wonders, unicorns (though *Aldobrandus* will have them to be figments) satyrs, semiviri, apes, monkeys, baboons, curiosities artificial, *pyramides*, Virgilius his tombe, relicks, bones, which are nothing but ivory as *Melancthon* judges, though *Cornutus* leaneth to think them bones of dogs, cats, (why not men ?) which subtill priests vouch to have been saints, martyrs, *heu Pietas!* By that time he has ended his course, *fugit hora*, seven other years are expired, gone by, time is he should return, he taketh ship for Britaine, much desired of his friends, *favebant venti, Neptune is curteis*, after some weeks at sea he landeth, rides post to town, greets his family, kinsmen, *compotores, those jokers his friends that were wont to tipple with him at alehouses;* these wonder now to see the change, *quantum mutatus, the man is quite another thing*, he is disenthralled, manumitted, he wonders what so bewitched him, he can now both see, hear, smell, handle, converse with his mistress, single by reason of the death of his rival, a widow

having children, grown willing, prompt, amorous, shewing no such great dislike to second nuptials, he might have her for asking, no such thing, his mind is changed, he loathes his former meat, had liever eat ratsbane, aconite, his humour is to die a bachelour ; marke the conclusion. In this humour of celibate seven other years are consumed in idleness, sloth, world's pleasures, which fatigate, satiate, induce wearinesse, *tædium vitæ:* When upon a day, behold a wonder, *redit Amor*, the man is as sick as ever, he is commenced lover upon the old stock, walks with his hand thrust in his bosom for negligence, moping he leans his head, face yellow, beard flowing and incomposite, eyes sunken, *anhelus, breath wheezy and asthmatical*, by reason *of over-much sighing :* society he abhors, solitude is but a hell, what shall he doe ? all this while his mistresse is forward, coming, *amantissima, ready to jump at once into his mouth*, her he hateth, feels disgust when she is but mentioned, thinks her ugly, old, a painted Jesabeel, Alecto, Megara, and Tisiphone all at once, a Corinthian Lais, a strumpet, only not handsome ; that which he affecteth so much, that which drives him mad, distracted, phrenetic, beside himself, is no beauty which lives, nothing *in rerum naturâ*, (so he might entertain a hope of a cure) but something *which is not*, can never be, a certain *fantastic opinion* or *notional image* of his mistresse, *that which she was*, and that which hee thought her to be, in former times, how beautiful ! torments him, frets him, follows him, makes him that he wishes to die.

This Caprichio, *Sir Humourous*, hee cometh to me to be cured. I counsel marriage with his mistresse, according to Hippocrates his method, together with milk diet, herbs, aloes, and wild parsley, good in such cases, though Avicenna preferreth some sorts of wild fowl, teals, widgeons, becca ficos, which men in Sussex eat. He flies out in a passion, ho ! ho ; and falls to calling me names, dizzard, ass, lunatic, moper, Bedlamite, Pseudo-Democritus. I smile in his face, bidding him to be patient, tranquil, to no purpose, he still rages, I think this man must fetch his remedies from Utopia, Fairy Land, Islands in the Moone, &c.

EXTRACT II

* * * * * Much disputacyons of fierce wits amongst themselves, in logomachies, subtile controversies, many dry blows given on either side, contentions of learned men, or such as would be so thought, as *Bodinus de Periodis* saith of such an one, *arrident amici ridet mundus*, in English, this man his cronies they cocker him up, they flatter him, he would fayne appear somebody, meanwhile the world thinks him no better than a dizzard, a ninny, a sophist. * * * * * Philosophy running mad, madness philosophizing, much idle-learned enquiries, what truth is ? and no issue, fruit, of all these noises, only huge books are written, and who is the wiser ? * * * * * Men sitting in the Doctor's [1]chair, we marvel how they got there, being *homines intellectûs pulverulenti*, as Trincauellius notes; they care not so they may raise a dust to smother the eyes of their oppugners; *homines parvulissimi* as *Lemnius*, whom *Alcuin* herein taxeth of a crude Latinism ; dwarfs, minims, the least little men, these spend their time, and it is odds but they lose their time and wits too into the bargain, chacing of nimble and retiring Truth: Her they prosecute, her still they worship, *libant*, they make libations, spilling the wine, as those old Romans in their sacrificials, *Cerealia, May-games :* Truth is the game all these hunt after, to the extreme perturbacyon and drying up of the moistures, *humidum radicale exsiccant*, as *Galen*, in his counsels to one of these wear-wits, brain-moppers, spunges, saith. * * * * and for all this *nunquam metam attingunt*, and how should they ? they bowle awry, shooting beside the marke ; whereas it should appear, that *Truth absolute* on this planet of ours is scarcely to be found, but in her stede *Queene Opinion* predominates, governs, whose shifting and ever mutable *Lampas*, me seemeth, is man's destinie to follow, she præcurseth, she guideth him, before his uncapable eyes she frisketh her tender lights, which entertayne the child-man, untill what time his sight be strong to endure the vision of *Very Truth*, which is in the heavens, the vision beatifical, as *Anianus* expounds in his argument against certain mad wits which helde God to be

[1] chair] chairs 1802

corporeous; these were dizzards, fools, *gothamites.* * * * * but and if *Very Truth* be extant indeede on earth, as some hold she it is which actuates men's deeds, purposes, ye may in vaine look for her in the learned universities, halls, colleges. Truth is no Doctoresse, she takes no degrees at Paris or Oxford, amongst great clerks, disputants, subtile Aristotles, men *nodosi ingenii, able to take Lully by the chin,* but oftentimes to such an one as myself, an *Idiota* or common person, *no great things,* melancholizing in woods where waters are, quiet places by rivers, fountains, whereas the silly man expecting no such matter, thinketh only how best to delectate and refresh his mynde continually with *Natura* her pleasaunt scenes, woods, water-falls, or *Art* her statelie gardens, parks, terraces, *Belvideres,* on a sudden the goddesse herself *Truth* has appeared, with a shyning lyghte, and a sparklyng countenance, so as yee may not be able lightly to resist her. * * * * *

[1] EXTRACT III

This morning, May 2, 1662, having first broken my fast upon eggs and cooling salades, mellows, water-cresses, those herbes, according to *Villanovus* his prescription, who disallows the use of meat in a morning as gross, fat, hebetant, *feral,* altogether fitter for wild beasts than men, *e contra* commendeth this herb-diete for gentle, humane, active, conducing to contemplation in most men, I betook myselfe to the nearest fields. (Being in London I commonly dwell in the *suburbes,* as airiest, quietest, *loci musis propriores,* free from noises of caroches, waggons, mechanick, and base workes, workshoppes, also sights, pageants, spectacles of outlandish birds, fishes, crocodiles, *Indians,* mermaids, adde quarrels, fightings, wranglings of the [2]common sort, *plebs,* the rabble, duelloes with fists, *proper to this island,* at which the stiletto'd and secrete *Italian* laughs.) Withdrawing myselfe from these buzzing and illiterate vanities, with a *bezo las manos* to the city, I begin to inhale, draw in, snuff up, as horses *dilatis naribus* snort the fresh aires, with exceeding great

[1] *In* 1802 *this fragment stands as* EXTRACT IV, *and the verses entitled* HYPOCHONDRIACUS *in the* WORKS *of* 1818 *as* EXTRACT III *under the title,* A CONCEIPT OF DIABOLICAL POSSESSION. *See* HYPOCHONDRIACUS *and notes,* POEMS *of* 1800, *below.* [2] common sort] mobbe 1802.

delight, when suddenly there crosses me a procession sad, heavy, dolourous, tristfull, melancholick, able to change mirth into dolour, and overcast a clearer atmosphere than possibly the neighbourhoods of so great a citty can afford. An old man, a poore man, deceased, is borne on men's shoulders to a poore buriall, without solemnities of hearse, mourners, plumes, *mutæ personæ, those personate actors that will weep if yee shew them a piece of silver ;* none of those customed civilities of children, kinsfolk, *dependants*, following the coffin ; he died a poore man, his friends *assessores opum, those cronies of his that stuck by him so long as he had a penny*, now leave him, forsake him, shun him, desert him ; they think it much to follow his putrid and stinking carcase to the grave ; his children, if he had any, for commonly the case stands thus, this poore man his son dies before him, he survives, poore, indigent, base, dejected, miserable, &c. or if he have any which survive him, *sua negotia agunt*, they mind their own business, forsooth, cannot, will not, find time, leisure, *inclination, extremum munus perficere*, to follow to the pit their old indulgent father, which loved them, stroked them, caressed them, cockering them up, *quantum potuit*, as farre as his means extended, while they were babes, chits, *minims*, hee may rot in his grave, lie stinking in the sun *for them*, have no buriall at all, they care not. *O nefas !* Chiefly I noted the coffin to have been *without a pall*, nothing but a few planks, of cheapest wood that could be had, *naked*, having none of the ordinary *symptomata* of a funerall, those *locularii* which bare the body having on diversely coloured coats, *and none black :* (one of these reported the deceased to have been an almsman seven yeares, a pauper, harboured and fed in the workhouse of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, to whose proper burying-ground he was now going for interment). All which when I behelde, hardly I refrained from weeping, and incontinently I fell to musing : ' If this man had been rich, a *Crœsus*, a *Crassus, or as rich as Whittington*, what pompe, charge, lavish cost, expenditure, of rich buriall, *ceremoniall-obsequies, obsequious ceremonies*, had been thought too good for such an one ; what store of panegyricks, elogies, funeral orations, &c. some beggarly poetaster, worthy to be beaten for his ill rimes, crying him up, hee was rich, generous, bountiful,

polite, learned, *a Mœcenas*, while as in very deede he was nothing lesse: what weeping, sighing, sorrowing, honing, complaining, kinsmen, friends, relatives, fourtieth cousins, poor relatives, lamenting for the deceased; hypocriticall heirs, sobbing, striking their breasts, (they care not if he had died a year ago); so many clients, dependants, flatterers, *parasites*, *cunning Gnathoes*, tramping on foot after the hearse, all their care is, who shall stand fairest with the successour; he mean time (like enough) spurns them from him, spits at them, treads them under his foot, will have nought to do with any such cattle. I think him in the right: *Hæc sunt majora gravitate Heracliti. These follies are enough to give crying Heraclitus a fit of the* [1]*spleene.*

GRAND STATE BED

[Printed in *The Morning Post*, January 4, 1802. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, vol. vii, 1905, p. 980.]

EVER since an account of the Marquis of Exeter's Grand State Bed appeared in the fashionable world, grandeur in this article of furniture has become quite the rage. Among others the Lord Mayor, feeling for the dignity of the city of London, has petitioned the Corporation for one of great splendour to be placed in the Mansion-house, *at the City's expence.*

We have been favoured with a description of this magnificent state bed, the choice of his Lordship. The body is formed by the callipee, or under shell of a large turtle, carved in mahogany, and sufficiently capacious to receive two well-fed people. The callipash, or upper shell, forms the canopy. The posts are four gigantic figures richly gilt: two of them accurate copies of Gog and Magog; the other two represent Sir William Walworth and the last man in armour. Cupids with custards are the supporters. The curtains are of mazarine purple, and curiously wrought with

[1] *spleene.*] *spleene.* The fruit, issue, *children*, of these my morning meditations, have been certain crude, impolite, incomposite, *hirsute* (what shall I say ?) *verses*, noting the difference of *rich* and *poor*, in the ways of a rich noble's palace and a poor workhouse. 1811. (*Here follow the stanzas printed in the* WORKS *of* 1818 *as* A BALLAD: NOTING THE DIFFERENCE OF RICH AND POOR, *etc. See* POEMS *of* 1800, *below.*)

the series of the idle and industrious apprentice from Hogarth, in gold embroidery: but the vallens exceed description; *there*, the various incidents in the life of Whittington are painted. The mice in one of the compartments are done so much to the life, that his Lordship's cat, who is an accurate judge of mice, was deceived. The quilt is of fashionable patchwork figures, the description of which we shall not anticipate, as, we understand, Mr. Birch has obtained a sketch of it for his large Twelfth Cake. The whole is worthy of the taste of the first Magistrate of the first City in the world.

FABLE FOR TWELFTH DAY

[Printed in *The Morning Post*, January 6, 1802. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. vii, 1905, p. 980.]

Once upon a high and solemn occasion all the great *fasts* and *festivals* in the year presented themselves before the throne of *Apollo*, *God* of *Days*.—Each brought an offering in his hand, as is the custom all over the *East*, that no man shall appear before the presence of the King empty-handed. *Shrove-Tuesday* was there with his *pan-cakes*, and *Ash-Wednesday* with his oblation of *fish*. *Good Friday* brought the mystical *bun*. *Christmas-Day* came bending underneath an intolerable load of *turkeys* and *mince-pies*, his snow-white temples shaded with *holly* and the sacred *misletoe*, and *singing* a *carol* as he advanced. Next came the *Thirtieth* of *January*, bearing a *calf's-head* in a charger; but *Apollo* no sooner understood the emblematical meaning of the offering, than the stomach of the *God* turned sick, and with visible indignation and abhorrence he ordered the unfortunate *Day* out of his presence—the contrite *Day* returned in a little time, bearing in his hands a *Whig* (a sort of cake well-tempered and delicious)—the *God* with smiles accepted the atonement, and the happy *Day* understood that his peace was made, he promising never to bring such a dish into the presence of a *God* again. Then came the august *Fourth* of *June*, crowned with such a crown as British Monarchs commonly wear, leading into the presence the venerable *Nineteenth* of *May*—*Apollo* welcomed the royal pair, and placed them nearest to himself, and welcomed

their noble progeny, their eldest-born and heir, the accomplished *Twelfth* of *August*, with all his brave brothers and handsome sisters. Only the merry *First* of *April*, who is retained in the Court of *Apollo* as *King's Jester*, made some mirth by his reverent inquiries after the health of the *Eighteenth* of *January* who, being a *kept* mistress, had not been deemed a proper personage to be introduced into such an assembly. *Apollo*, laughing, rebuked the petulance of his wit; so all was mirth and good humour in the palace—only the sorrowful *Epiphany* stood silent and abashed—he was *poor*, and had come before the King without an oblation. The *God* of *Days* perceived his confusion, and turning to the *Muses* (who are *nine*), and to the *Graces*, his hand-maids (who are *three* in number), he beckoned to them, and gave to them in charge to prepare a *Cake* of the richest and preciousest ingredients: they obeyed, tempering with their fine and delicate fingers the spices of the *East*, the bread-flour of the *West*, with the fruits of the *South*, pouring over all the *Ices* of the *North*. The God himself crowned the whole with *talismanic figures*, which contained this wondrous virtue—that whosoever ate of the *Cake* should forthwith become *Kings* and *Queens*. Lastly, by his heralds, he invested the trembling and thankful *Epiphany* with the privilege of presenting this Cake before the King upon an annual festival for ever. Now this Cake is called *Twelfth Cake* upon earth, after the *number* of the virgins who fashioned the same, being *nine* and *three*.

G. F. COOKE IN 'RICHARD THE THIRD'

[Composed January, 1802. Printed in *The Morning Post*, January 8, 1802. Identified and reprinted by James Dykes Campbell in *The Athenæum*, August 4, 1888; first collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works of C. and M. L.*, vol. i, 1903, p. 36.]

SOME few of us remember to have *seen*, and all of us have heard our fathers tell of Quin, and Garrick, and Barry, and some faint traditional notices are left us of their manner in particular scenes, and their stile of delivering certain emphatic sentences. Hence our curiosity is excited, when a *new Hamlet* or a *new Richard* makes his appearance, in the

first place, to inquire, how he acted in the *Closet scene*, in the *Tent scene ;* how he looked, and how he started, when the *Ghost* came on, and how he cried

Off with his head. So much for Buckingham.

We do not reprehend this minute spirit of comparison. On the contrary, we consider it as a delightful artifice, by which we connect the recreations of the past with those of the present generation, what pleased our fathers with what pleases us. We love to witness the obstinate attachments, the unconquerable prejudices (as they seem to us), of the old men, our seniors, the whimsical gratification they appear to derive from the very refusal to be gratified ; to hear them talk of the good *old* actors, whose race is for ever extinct.

With these impressions, we attended the first appearance of Mr. Cooke, in the character of *Richard the Third*, last winter. We thought that he ' bustled ' through the scenes with at least as much spirit and effect as any of his predecessors whom we remember in the part, and was not deficient in the delivery of any of those rememberable speeches and exclamations, which old prescription hath set up as *criteria* of comparison. Now that the grace of freshness is worn off, and Mr. Cooke is no longer a novitiate candidate for public favour, we propose to enter into the question—whether that popular actor is right or wrong in his conception of the great outlines of the character ; those strong essential differences which separate *Richard* from all the other creations of Shakespeare. We say *of Shakespeare ;* for though the Play, which passes for *his* upon the *Stage*, materially differs from *that* which *he* wrote under the same title, being in fact little better than a compilation or a cento of passages extracted from other of his Plays, and applied with gross violations of propriety (as we are ready at any time to point out), besides some miserable additions, which *he* never could have written ; all together producing an inevitable inconsistency of character, sufficient to puzzle and confound the *best Actor ; yet*, in this chaos and perplexity, we are of opinion, that it becomes an Actor to shew his taste, by adhering, as much as possible, to the spirit and intention of the original Author, and to consult his *safety* in *steering* by the *Light*, which Shakespeare holds out to him,

as by a great *Leading Star*. Upon these principles, we presume to censure Mr. Cooke, while we are ready to acknowledge, that this Actor presents us with a very original and very forcible portrait (if not of the *man Richard*, whom Shakespeare drew, yet) of the *monster Richard*, as he exists in the *popular idea*, in *his own exaggerated* and *witty self-abuse*, in the overstrained representations of the parties who were *sufferers* by his *ambition ;* and, above all, in the impertinent and wretched *scenes*, so absurdly foisted in by some, who have thought themselves capable of adding to what *Shakespeare wrote*.

But of Mr. Cooke's *Richard :*

1st. *His predominant and masterly simulation.*

He has a tongue can wheedle with the Devil.

It has been the policy of that antient and grey simulator, in all ages, to hide his *horns* and *claws*. The *Richard* of Mr. Cooke perpetually obtrudes *his*. We see the effect of his deceit uniformly *successful*, but we do not comprehend *how it succeeds*. We can put ourselves, by a very common fiction, into the place of the individuals upon whom it acts, and say, that, in the like case, we should not have been alike credulous. The hypocrisy is too glaring and visible. It resembles more the shallow cunning of a mind which is its own dupe, than the profound and practised art of so powerful an intellect as *Richard's*. It is too obstreperous and loud, breaking out into *triumphs* and *plaudits* at its own success, like an unexercised *noviciate* in *tricks*. It has none of the silent confidence, and steady self-command of the *experienced politician ;* it possesses none of that *fine address*, which was necessary to have betrayed the heart of *Lady Anne*, or even to have imposed upon the duller wits of the *Lord Mayor* and *Citizens*.

2dly. *His habitual jocularity*, the effect of buoyant spirits, and an elastic mind, rejoicing in its own powers, and in the success of its machinations. This quality of unstrained mirth accompanies *Richard*, and is a prime feature in his character. It never leaves him ; in plots, in stratagems, and in the midst of his bloody devices, it is perpetually driving him upon wit, and jests, and personal satire, fanciful allusions, and quaint felicities of phrase. It is one of the

chief artifices by which the consummate master of dramatic effect has contrived to soften the horrors of the scene, and to make us contemplate a bloody and vicious character with delight. No where, in any of his plays, is to be found so much of sprightly colloquial dialogue, and soliloquies of genuine humour, as in *Richard*. This character of unlaboured mirth Mr. Cooke seems entirely to pass over, and substitutes in its stead the coarse, taunting humour, and clumsy merriment, of a low-minded assassin.

3dly. *His personal deformity.*—When the *Richard* of Mr. Cooke makes allusions to his own *form*, they seem accompanied with *unmixed distaste* and *pain*, like some obtrusive and *haunting* idea—But surely the *Richard* of Shakespeare mingles in these allusions a perpetual reference to his own powers and capacities, by which he is enabled to surmount these petty objections ; and the joy of a defect *conquered*, or *turned* into an advantage, is one cause of these very allusions, and of the satisfaction, with which his mind recurs to them. These allusions themselves are made in an ironical and good humoured spirit of exaggeration—the most bitter of them are to be found in his self-congratulating soliloquy spoken in the very moment and crisis of joyful exultation on the success of his unheard of courtship.—No *partial excellence* can satisfy for this absence of a *just general conception*—otherwise we are inclined to admit, that, in the delivery of *single sentences*, in a *new* and often *felicitous* light thrown upon *old* and *hitherto misconstrued* passages, no actor that we have seen has gone beyond Mr. Cooke. He is always *alive* to the scene before him ; and by the *fire* and *novelty* of his manner, he seems likely to infuse some *warm blood* into the *frozen declamatory stile*, into which our theatres have for some time past been degenerating.

G. F. COOKE IN 'KING LEAR'

[Printed under the heading, *Theatre—Covent Garden*, in *The Morning Post*, January 9, 1802. First collected as (probably) Lamb's by Mr. E. V. Lucas : *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903, p. 399, *note*.]

'Mr. Cooke performed *Lear* in the celebrated Tragedy of that name at this Theatre last night. It is a character little

suited to his talents. In the expression of strong and turbulent passions, he will always find his forte ; but he wants gentleness and softness for melting and melancholy scenes. Whatever, therefore, may be his excellence in the ambitious and heroic *Richard*, those who have duly weighed his peculiar powers could not expect much from his representation of the broken-hearted *Lear*. No principle can be more clear, than that cruelty and ingratitude are black in proportion to the weakness and helplessness of the object on which they are exercised. The great master of the human heart accordingly makes this good old King represent himself as a man standing upon the last verge of life—a man 'eighty years old and upwards'. It is from turning such a man as this out of doors, and by his ungrateful children, too, to 'bide the pelting of the pityless storm', that the interest principally arises. In this line, so clearly marked by the poet, Mr. Cooke showed a total want of discrimination. His step was almost uniformly firm, and his whole deportment too vigorous for his years. The heart, therefore, could not feel that pity which the sight of a deserving object, physically unable to contend with unmerited hardships, never fails to produce. His enunciation also, which was clear and strong, had none of the tremulousness of feeble old age, and his voice seldom succeeded in the modulation of tones sufficiently plaintive and delicate to express the agonies of a broken heart. The scene where he imprecates a curse upon the undutiful *Goneril* was given with energy, but without that anguish which must wring a parent's bosom in such a situation. The mad scene with *Edgar* was also a very imperfect piece of acting, and few of the beautiful passages with which the piece abounds, received that excellent colouring and embellishment with which Mr. Kemble in the same character calls down such plaudits in the other House. Mr. Cooke having so evidently placed himself in the way of comparison, this allusion cannot be deemed invidious.—This new essay should, however, make him slow to venture beyond his depth, and justifies our apprehension that he does not possess an elasticity of mind, a pliancy of powers, to enable him to pursue his rival through all the variety of his characters with the same success that he encounters him on Bosworth field.

Mr. H. Siddons was an excellent *Edgar ;* his mad scenes displayed much chaste and natural acting, and several passages were marked with beauties peculiarly his own. His representation of the character would be still more interesting, were he to infuse into his manner more fondness for his mistress, *Cordelia*, and his unfortunate father, the *Earl of Gloucester*. Miss Murray, whose excellence in characters of simple pathos is so well known, was a most interesting portrait of *Cordelia*. She played the part with great delicacy and feeling, sweetness and simplicity.

Mr. Hull, in *Glo'ster*, was natural and impressive ; and Mr. Waddy, though a little coarse as *Earl of Kent*, was a good picture of blunt honesty in his humble disguise as *Caius*. The other characters did not possess much merit, or deserve much notice.

THE LONDONER

[Printed in *The Morning Post*, February 1, 1802, under the title, *The Londoner. No. I.* Reprinted in *Works*, 1818. Text of 1818.]

[1] *To the Editor of the Reflector.*

Mr. Reflector,—I was born under the shadow of St. Dunstan's steeple, just where the conflux of the eastern and western inhabitants of this twofold city meet and justle in friendly opposition at Temple-bar. The same day which gave me to the world, saw London happy in the celebration of her great annual feast. This I cannot help looking upon as a lively [2]omen of the future great good will which I was destined to bear toward the city, resembling in kind that solicitude which every Chief Magistrate is supposed to feel for whatever concerns her interests and well being. Indeed I consider myself in some sort a speculative Lord Mayor of London : for though circumstances unhappily preclude me

[1] *To the Editor of the Reflector.* Mr. Reflector,—[*These words introduce the essay in the* Works *of* 1818, but The Londoner *never appeared in* The Reflector. *In* 1802 *it begins thus:*—In compliance with my own particular humour, no less than with thy laudable curiosity, Reader, I proceed to give thee some account of my history and habits. I was born under the nose of St. Dunstan's steeple . . . [2] omen] type or omen 1802.

from the hope of ever arriving at the dignity of a gold chain and Spital Sermon, yet thus much will I say of myself in truth, that [1]Whittington with his Cat (just emblem of vigilance and a furred gown) never went beyond me in affection, which I bear to the [2]citizens.

[3]I was born, as you have heard, in a crowd. This has begot in me an entire affection for that way of life, amounting to an almost insurmountable aversion from solitude and rural scenes. This aversion was never interrupted or suspended, except for a few years in the younger part of my life, during a period in which I had set my affections upon a charming young woman. Every man while the passion is upon him, is for a time at least addicted to groves and meadows and purling streams. During this short period of my existence, I contracted just [4]familiarity enough with rural objects to understand tolerably well ever after the *poets*, when they declaim in such passionate terms in favor of a country life.

For my own part, now the fit is past, I have no hesitation in declaring, that a mob of happy faces crowding up at the pit door of Drury-lane Theatre, just at the hour of [5]six, gives me ten thousand sincerer pleasures, than I could ever receive from all the flocks of silly sheep that [6]ever whitened the plains of Arcadia or Epsom Downs.

This passion for crowds is no where feasted so full as in London. The man must have a rare *recipe* for melancholy, who can be dull in Fleet-street. I am naturally inclined to hypochondria, but in London it vanishes, like all other ills. Often, when I have felt a weariness or distaste at home, have I rushed out into her crowded Strand, and fed

[1] Whittington] Whittington himself 1802. [2] citizens.] citizens. Shut out from serving them in the most honourable mode, I aspire to do them benefit in another, scarcely less honourable; and, if I cannot, by virtue of office, commit vice and irregularity to the *material Counter*, I will, at least, erect a *spiritual one*, where they shall be *laid fast by the heels*. In plain words, I will do my best endeavour to *write them down*. 1802. [3] I was born . . . crowd] To return to *myself* (from whence my zeal for the Public good is perpetually causing me to digress) I will let thee, Reader, into certain more of my peculiarities. I was born (as you have heard), bred, and have passed most of my time, in a *crowd*. 1802. [4] familiarity enough] enough familiarity 1802. [5] six . . . receive] five, give me ten thousand finer pleasures, than I ever received 1802. [6] ever] have 1802.

my humour, till tears have wetted my cheek for inutterable sympathies with the multitudinous moving picture, which she never fails to present at all hours, like the [1]scenes of a shifting pantomime.

The very deformities of London, which give distaste to others, from habit do not displease me. The endless succession of shops where *Fancy miscalled Folly* is supplied with [2]perpetual gauds and toys, excite in me no puritanical aversion. I gladly behold every appetite supplied with its proper food. The obliging customer, and the obliged tradesman—things which live by bowing, and things which exist but for homage—do not affect me with disgust; from habit I perceive nothing but urbanity, where other men, more refined, discover meanness: I love the very smoke of London, because it has been the medium most familiar to my vision. I see grand principles of honor at work in the dirty ring which encompasses two combatants with fists, and principles of no less eternal justice in the [3]detection of a pickpocket. The salutary astonishment with which an execution is surveyed, convinces me more forcibly than a hundred volumes of abstract polity, that the universal instinct of man in all ages has leaned to order and good government.

Thus an art of extracting morality from the commonest incidents of a town life, is attained by the same well-natured alchymy, with which the Foresters of Arden, in a beautiful country,

> Found tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.

Where has spleen her food but in London? Humour, Interest, Curiosity, suck at her measureless breasts without a possibility of being satiated. Nursed amid her noise, her crowds, her beloved smoke, what have I been doing all my life, if I have not lent out my heart with usury to such scenes!

[4]I am, Sir, your faithful servant,
A Londoner.

[1] scenes . . . pantomine] shifting scenes of a skilful Pantomine 1802. [2] perpetual] perpetual new 1802 [3] detection] tumultous detectors 1802. [4] I am, . . . Londoner.] Reader, in the course of my peregrinations about the great city, it is hard, if I have not picked up

CHARACTERS OF DRAMATIC WRITERS, CONTEMPORARY WITH SHAKSPEARE

[Printed as editorial notes in *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets who lived about the Time of Shakspeare*, 1808. Reprinted with revised text, as *Characters of Dramatic Writers, Contemporary with Shakspeare*, in the *Works* of 1818. Text of 1818. For the notes of 1808 omitted in 1818 see Editor's Notes.]

[1]When I selected for publication, in 1808, Specimens of English Dramatic Poets who lived about the time of Shakspeare, the kind of extracts which I was anxious to give were, not so much passages of wit and humour, though the old plays are rich in such, as scenes of passion, sometimes of the deepest quality, interesting situations, serious descriptions, that which is more nearly allied to poetry than to wit, and to tragic rather than to comic poetry. The plays which I [2]made choice of were, with few exceptions, such as treat of human life and manners, rather than masques and Arcadian pastorals, with their train of abstractions, unimpassioned deities, passionate mortals—Claius, and Medorus, and Amintas, and Amarillis. My leading design [3]was, to illustrate what may be called the moral sense of our ancestors. To shew in what manner they felt, when they placed themselves by the power of imagination in trying circumstances, in the conflicts of duty and passion, or the strife of contending duties; what sort of loves and enmities theirs were; how their griefs were tempered, and their full-swoln joys abated: how much of Shakspeare shines in the great men his contemporaries, and how far in his divine mind and manners he surpassed them and all mankind. [4]I was also desirous to bring together some of the most admired scenes of Fletcher and Massinger, in the estimation of the world the only dramatic

matter, which may serve to amuse thee, as it has done me, a winter evening long. When next we meet, I purpose opening my budget.—Till when, farewell. 1802. [1] When I selected . . . to give were] The kind of extracts which I have sought after have been, *fourth paragraph of Preface*, 1808. *See Editor's Notes.* [2] made choice of were] have made choice of have been 1808. [3] was] has been 1808. [4] I was also desirous] Another object which I had in making these selections was 1808.

poets of that age [1]entitled to be considered after Shakspeare, and, [2]by exhibiting them in the same volume with the more impressive scenes of Old Marlowe, Heywood, Tourneur, Webster, Ford, and others, to shew what we [3]had slighted, while beyond all proportion we [4]had been crying up one or two favourite names. [5] From the desultory criticism which accompanied that publication, I have selected a few which I thought would best stand by themselves, as requiring least immediate reference to the play or passage by which they were suggested. [*Extract from Preface to* SPECIMENS OF ENGLISH DRAMATIC POETS, *&c.*, 1808.]

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

[6]*Lust's Dominion, or the Lascivious Queen.* [*Spec. Dram. Poets*, p. 17.]—This tragedy is in King Cambyses' vein ; rape, and murder, and superlatives ; ' huffing braggart puft lines,' such as the play-writers anterior to Shakspeare are full of, and Pistol but coldly imitates.

Tamburlaine the Great, or the Scythian Shepherd. [*ibid.*, p. 19.]—[7]The lunes of Tamburlaine are perfect midsummer madness. Nebuchadnazar's are mere modest pretensions compared with the thundering vaunts of this Scythian Shepherd. He comes [8]in, drawn by conquered kings, and reproaches these *pampered jades of Asia* that they can *draw but twenty miles a day*. Till I saw this passage with my own eyes, I never believed that it was any thing more than a pleasant burlesque of mine ancient's. But I can assure my readers that it is soberly set down in a play, which their ancestors took to be [9]serious.

[1] entitled] who are entitled 1808. [2] by exhibiting . . . to shew] to exhibit . . . To shew 1818. [3] had] have 1818. [4] had been crying up] have cried up 1818. [5] *This sentence was added in* 1818. [6] *For note of* 1808 *see Editor's Notes.* [7] The lunes] I had the same difficulty (or rather much more) in culling a few sane lines from this as from the preceding Play. The lunes 1808. [8] in] in (in the Second Part) 1808. [9] serious.] serious. I have subjoined the genuine speech for their amusement. Enter Tamburlaine, drawn in his chariot by Trebizon and Soria, with bits in their mouths, reins in his left hand, in his right hand a whip, with which he scourgeth them. (*Twenty-four lines of Tamburlaine's speech beginning,* Holla ye pamper'd jades of Asia, *follow.*) 1808.

Edward the Second. [*ibid.* p. 28.]—In a very different style from mighty Tamburlaine is the tragedy of Edward the Second. The reluctant pangs of abdicating royalty in Edward furnished hints, which Shakspeare [1]scarcely improved in his Richard the Second ; and the death-scene of Marlowe's king moves pity and terror beyond any scene antient or modern with which I am acquainted.

The Rich Jew of Malta. [*ibid.*, p. 31.]—Marlowe's Jew does not approach so near to Shakspeare's, as his Edward the Second does to [2]Richard the Second. Barabas is a mere monster brought in with a large painted nose to please the rabble. He kills in sport, poisons whole nunneries, invents infernal machines. He is just such an exhibition as a century or two earlier might have been played before the Londoners ' by the royal command ', when a general pillage and massacre of the Hebrews had been previously resolved on in the cabinet. It is curious to see a superstition wearing out. The idea of a Jew, which our pious ancestors contemplated with [3]so much horror, has nothing in it now revolting. We have tamed the claws of the beast, and pared its nails, and now we take it to our arms, fondle it, write plays to flatter it ; it is visited by princes, affects a taste, patronizes the arts, and is the only liberal and gentlemanlike thing in Christendom.

Doctor Faustus. [*ibid.*, p. 40.]—The growing horrors of [4]Faustus's last scene are awfully marked by the hours and half hours as they expire, and bring him nearer and nearer to the exactment of his dire compact. It is indeed an agony and a [5]fearful colluctation. Marlowe is said to have been tainted with atheistical positions, to have denied God and the Trinity. To such a genius the history of Faustus must have been delectable food : to wander in fields where curiosity is forbidden to go, to approach the dark gulf near enough to look in, to be busied in speculations which are the rottenest part of the core of the fruit that fell

[1] scarcely] scarce 1808 [2] Richard the Second.] Richard II. Shylock in the midst of his savage purpose is a man. His motives, feelings, resentments, have something human in them. ' If you wrong us, shall we not revenge ? ' 1808. [3] so much] such 1808. [4] Faustus's last scene] Faustus 1808. [5] fearful colluctation] bloody sweat 1808.

from the tree of knowledge.[a] Barabas the Jew, and Faustus the conjurer, are offsprings of a mind which at least delighted to dally with interdicted subjects. They both talk a language which a believer would have been tender of putting into the mouth of a character though but in fiction. But the holiest minds have sometimes not thought it [1]reprehensible to counterfeit impiety in the person of another, to bring [2]Vice upon the stage speaking her own dialect; and, themselves being armed with an unction of self-confident impunity, have not scrupled to handle and touch that familiarly, which would be death to others. Milton in the person of Satan has started speculations hardier than any which the feeble armoury of the atheist ever furnished; and the precise, strait-laced Richardson has strengthened Vice, from the mouth of Lovelace, with entangling sophistries and abstruse pleas against her adversary Virtue, which Sedley, Villiers, and Rochester, wanted depth of libertinism [3]enough to have invented.

Thomas Decker

Old Fortunatus. [*Spec. Dram. Poets*, p. 62.]—[4]The humour of a frantic lover, in the scene where Orleans to his friend Galloway defends the passion with which himself, being a prisoner in the English king's court, is enamoured to frenzy of the king's daughter Agripyna, is done to the life. Orleans is as passionate an inamorato as any which Shakspeare ever drew. He is just such another adept in Love's reasons. The sober people of the world are with him

> ——A swarm of fools
> Crowding together to be counted wise.

He talks 'pure Biron and Romeo', he is almost as poetical as they, quite as philosophical, only a little madder. After all, Love's sectaries are a reason unto themselves. We have

[a] Error, entering into the world with Sin among us poor Adamites, may be said to spring from the tree of knowledge itself, and from the rotten kernels of that fatal apple.—*Howell's Letters.*

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[1] reprehensible] blameable 1808. [2] Vice upon] Vice in upon 1808. [3] enough] sufficient 1808. [4] The humour . . . to the life.] The humour of a frantic lover is here done to the life. 1818.

gone retrograde [1]to the noble heresy, since the days when Sidney proselyted our nation to this mixed health and disease; the kindliest symptom, yet the most alarming crisis in the ticklish state of youth; the nourisher and the destroyer of hopeful wits; the mother of twin births, wisdom and folly, valour and weakness; the servitude above freedom; the gentle mind's religion; the liberal superstition.

The Honest Whore. [*ibid.*, p. 64.]—[2]There is in the second part of this play, where Bellafront, a reclaimed harlot, recounts some of the miseries of her profession, [3]a simple picture of honour and shame, contrasted without violence, and expressed without immodesty, [4]which is worth all the *strong lines* against the harlot's profession, with which both parts of this play are offensively crowded. A satirist is always to be suspected, who, to make vice odious, dwells upon all its acts and minutest circumstances with a sort of relish and retrospective [5]fondness. But so near are the boundaries of panegyric and invective, that a worn-out sinner is sometimes found to make the best declaimer against sin. The same high-seasoned descriptions, which in his unregenerate state [6]served but to inflame his appetites, in his new province of a moralist will serve him, a little turned, to expose the enormity of those appetites in other men. When Cervantes with such proficiency of fondness dwells upon the Don's library, who sees not that he has been a great reader of books of knight-errantry—perhaps was at some time of his life in danger of falling into those very extravagancies which he ridiculed so happily in his hero?

John Marston

Antonio and Mellida. [*S. D. P.*, pp. 73–4.]—The situation of Andrugio and Lucio, [7]in the first part of this tragedy,

[1] to] in 1808. [2] There . . . profession *omit* 1808. [3] a] This 1808. [4] which *omit* 1808. [5] fondness] gust 1808. [6] served but to . . . men. When Cervantes] served to . . . men. No one will doubt, who reads Marston's Satires, that the Author in some part of his life must have been something more than a theorist in vice. Have we never heard an old preacher in the pulpit display such an insight into the mystery of ungodliness, as made us wonder with reason how a good man came by it? When Cervantes 1808. [7] in the first . . . and a page *omit* 1808.

where Andrugio Duke of Genoa banished his country, with the loss of a son supposed drowned, is cast upon the territory of his mortal enemy the Duke of Venice, with no attendants but Lucio an old nobleman, and a page—resembles that of Lear and Kent in that king's distresses. Andrugio, like Lear, manifests a [1]kinglike impatience, a turbulent greatness, an affected resignation. The enemies which he enters lists to combat, 'Despair and mighty Grief and sharp Impatience,' and the forces which he brings to vanquish them, 'cornets of horse,' &c. are in the boldest style of allegory. They are such a 'race of mourners' as the 'infection of sorrows loud' in the intellect might beget on some 'pregnant cloud' in the imagination. [2]The prologue to the second part, for its passionate earnestness, and for the tragic note of preparation which it sounds, might have preceded one of those old tales of Thebes or Pelops' line, which Milton has so highly commended, as free from the common error of the poets in his [3]day, of 'intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity, brought in without discretion corruptly to gratify the people'. It is as solemn a preparative as the 'warning voice which he who saw the Apocalyps heard cry.'

What you Will.—O I shall ne'er forget how he went cloath'd. Act I. Scene 1. [*ibid.*, p. 84.]—To judge of the liberality of these notions of dress, we must advert to the days of Gresham, and the consternation which a phenomenon habited like the merchant here described would have excited among the flat round caps and cloth stockings upon 'Change, when those 'original arguments or tokens of a citizen's vocation were in fashion, not more for thrift and usefulness than for distinction and grace'. The blank uniformity to which all professional distinctions in apparel have been long hastening, is one instance of the decay of symbols among us, which, whether it has contributed or not to make us a more intellectual, has certainly made us a less imaginative people. Shakspeare knew the force of signs: a 'malignant and a turban'd Turk'. This 'meal-cap miller', says the author of God's Revenge against Murder, to express his indignation at an atrocious out-

[1] kinglike] kind of royal 1808. [2] The prologue . . . part] This prologue 1808. [3] day] days 1808.

rage committed by the miller Pierot upon the person of the fair Marieta.

Author Unknown

The Merry Devil of Edmonton. [*S. D. P.*, p. 53.]—[1]The scene in this delightful comedy, in which Jerningham, ' with the true feeling of a zealous friend,' touches the griefs of Mounchensey, seems written to make the reader happy. Few of our dramatists or novelists have attended enough to this. They torture and wound us abundantly. They are economists only in delight. Nothing can be finer, more gentlemanlike, and [2]nobler, than the conversation and compliments of these young men. How delicious is Raymond Mounchensey's forgetting, in his fears, that Jerningham has a ' Saint in Essex ' ; and how sweetly his friend reminds him ! I wish it could be ascertained, [3]which there is some grounds for believing, that Michael Drayton was the author of this piece. It would add a worthy appendage to the renown of that Panegyrist of my native Earth ; who has gone over her soil, in his Polyolbion, with the fidelity of a herald, and the painful love of a son ; who has not left a rivulet, so narrow that it may be stept over, without honourable mention ; and has animated hills and streams with life and passion [4]beyond the dreams of old mythology.

Thomas Heywood

A Woman Killed with Kindness. [*S. D. P.*, p. 112.]—Heywood is a sort of *prose* Shakspeare. His scenes are to the full as natural and affecting. But we miss *the poet*, that which in Shakspeare always appears out and above the surface of *the nature*. Heywood's characters [5]in this play, for instance, his country gentlemen, &c. are exactly what we see, but of the best kind of what we see, in life. Shakspeare makes us believe, while we are among his lovely creations, that they are nothing but what we are familiar

[1] The scene . . . seems written] This scene has much of Shakspeare's manner in the sweetness and goodnaturedness of it. It seems written 1808. [2] nobler] noble 1808. [3] which . . . believing *omit* 1808. [4] beyond] above 1808. [5] in . . . instance *omit* 1808.

with, as in dreams new things seem old; but we awake, and sigh for the difference.

The English Traveller. [*ibid.*, p. 119.]—[1]Heywood's preface to this play is interesting, as it shews the heroic indifference about the opinion of posterity, which some of these great writers seem to have felt. There is a magnanimity in authorship as in every thing else. His ambition seems to have been confined to the pleasure of hearing the players speak his lines while he lived. It does not appear that he ever contemplated the possibility of being read by after ages. What a slender pittance of fame was motive sufficient to the production of such plays as the English Traveller, the Challenge for Beauty, and the Woman Killed with Kindness! Posterity is bound to take care that a writer loses nothing by such a noble modesty

Thomas Middleton and William Rowley

A Fair Quarrel. [*S. D. P.*, p. 136.]—The insipid levelling morality to which the modern stage is tied down, would not admit of such admirable passions as these scenes are filled with. A puritanical obtuseness of sentiment, a stupid infantile goodness, is creeping among us, instead of the vigorous passions, and virtues clad in flesh and blood, with which the old dramatists present us. Those noble and liberal casuists could discern in the differences, the quarrels, the animosities of men, a beauty and truth of moral feeling no less than in the [2]everlastingly inculcated duties of forgiveness and atonement. With us, all is hypocritical meekness. A reconciliation-scene, [3]be the occasion never so absurd, never fails of applause. Our audiences come to the theatre to be complimented on their goodness. They compare notes with the amiable characters in the play, and find a wonderful [4]sympathy of disposition between them. We have a common stock of dramatic morality, out of which a writer may be supplied without the trouble of copying it from originals within his own breast. To know

[1] *For the* 1808 *text of this see Editor's Notes.* [2] everlastingly] iterately 1808. [3] be . . . never fails] let the occasion be never so absurd or unnatural, is always sure 1808. [4] sympathy] similarity 1808.

the boundaries of honour, to be judiciously valiant, to have a temperance which shall beget a smoothness in the angry swellings of youth, to esteem life as nothing when the sacred reputation of a parent is to be defended, yet to shake and tremble under a pious cowardice when that ark of an honest confidence is found to be frail and tottering, to feel the true blows of a real disgrace blunting that sword which the imaginary strokes of a supposed false imputation had put so keen an edge upon but lately: to do, or to imagine this done in a feigned story, asks something more of a moral sense, somewhat a greater delicacy of perception in questions of right and wrong, than goes to the writing of two or three hackneyed sentences about the laws of honour as opposed to the laws of the land, or a common-place against duelling. Yet such things would stand a writer now-a-days in far better stead than Captain Agar and his conscientious honour; and he would be considered as a far better teacher of morality than old Rowley or Middleton, if they were living.

William Rowley

A New Wonder; a Woman Never Vext. [*S. D. P.*, p. 150.] —The old play-writers are distinguished by an honest boldness of exhibition, they shew every thing without being ashamed. If a reverse in fortune [1]is to be exhibited, they fairly bring us to the prison-grate and the alms-basket. A poor man on our stage is always a gentleman, he may be known by a peculiar neatness of apparel, and by wearing black. Our delicacy in fact forbids the dramatizing of distress at all. It is never shown in its essential properties; it appears but as the adjunct [2]of some virtue, as something which is to be relieved, from the approbation of which relief the spectators are to derive a certain soothing of self-referred satisfaction. We turn away from the real essences of things to hunt after their relative shadows, moral duties; whereas, if the truth of things were fairly represented, the relative duties might be safely trusted to themselves, and moral philosophy lose the name of a [3] science.

[1] is] be the thing 1808. [2] of] to 1808. [3] *For the remainder* (1808) *see Editor's Notes.*

Thomas Middleton

The Witch. [*S. D. P.*, p. 174.]—Though some resemblance may be traced between the charms in Macbeth, and the incantations in this play, which is supposed to have preceded it, this coincidence will not detract much from the originality of Shakspeare. His witches are distinguished from the witches of Middleton by essential differences. These are creatures to whom man or woman, plotting some dire mischief, might resort for occasional consultation. Those originate deeds of blood, and begin bad impulses to men. From the moment that their eyes first meet with Macbeth's, he is spell-bound. That meeting sways his destiny. He can never break the fascination. These witches can hurt the body, those have power over the soul. Hecate in Middleton has a son, a low buffoon : the hags of Shakspeare have neither child of their own, nor seem to be descended from any parent. They are foul anomalies, of whom we know not whence they are sprung, nor whether they have beginning or ending. As they are without human passions, so they seem to be without human relations. They come with thunder and lightning, and vanish to airy music. This is all we know of them. Except Hecate, they have no *names ;* which heightens their mysteriousness. The names, and some of the properties, which [1]the other author has given to his hags, excite smiles. The Weïrd Sisters are serious things. Their presence cannot co-exist with mirth. But, in a lesser degree, the witches of Middleton are fine creations. Their power too is, in some measure, over the mind. They raise jars, jealousies, strifes, ' like a thick scurf ' over life.

William Rowley,—Thomas Decker,—John Ford, &c.

The Witch of Edmonton. [*S. D. P.*, p. 178.]—Mother Sawyer, [2]in this wild play, differs from the hags of [3]both Middleton and Shakspeare. She is the plain traditional old woman witch of our ancestors ; poor, deformed, and ignorant ; the terror of villages, herself amenable to a

[1] the other author] Middleton 1808. [2] in . . . play *omit* 1808.
[3] both M. and S.] M. or S. 1808.

justice. That should be a hardy sheriff, with the power of the county at his heels, that would lay hands [1]upon the Weïrd Sisters. They are of another jurisdiction. But upon the common and received opinion, the author (or authors) have engrafted strong fancy. There is something frightfully earnest in her invocations to the Familiar.

Cyril Tourneur

The Revenger's Tragedy. [*S. D. P.*, p. 193.]—The reality and life of [2]the dialogue, in which Vindici and Hippolito first tempt their mother, and then threaten her with death for consenting to the dishonour of their sister, passes any scenical illusion I ever felt. I never read it but my ears tingle, and I feel a hot blush [3]overspread my cheeks, as if I were presently about to proclaim such malefactions of myself as the brothers here rebuke in their unnatural parent, in words more keen and dagger-like than those which Hamlet speaks to his mother. Such power has the passion of shame truly personated, not only to strike guilty creatures unto the soul, but to ' appal ' even those that are ' free '.

John Webster

The Duchess of Malfy. [*S. D. P.*, p. 217.]—All the several parts of the dreadful apparatus with which [4]the death of the Duchess is ushered in, [5]the waxen images which counterfeit death, the wild masque of madmen, the tomb-maker, the bellman, the living person's dirge, the mortification by degrees,—are not more remote from the conceptions of ordinary vengeance, than the strange character of suffering which they seem to bring upon their victim is [6]out of the imagination of ordinary poets. As they are not like inflictions of this life, so her language seems not of this world. She has lived among horrors till she is become ' native and endowed unto that element '. She speaks the dialect of despair ; her tongue has a smatch of Tartarus

[1] upon] on 1808. [2] the dialogue . . . their sister] this dialogue 1808. [3] overspread] spread 1808. [4] the . . Duchess] theDuchesses death 1808. [5] the waxen . . . by degrees *omit* 1808. [6] out of] beyond 1808.

and the [1]souls in bale. To move a horror skilfully, to touch a soul to the quick, to lay upon fear as much as it can bear, to wean and weary a life till it is ready to drop, and then step in with mortal instruments to take its last forfeit: this only a Webster can do. [2]Inferior geniuses may 'upon horror's head horrors accumulate', but they cannot do this. They mistake quantity for quality; they 'terrify babes with painted devils'; but they know not how a soul is to be moved. Their terrors want dignity, their affrightments are without decorum.

The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona. [*ibid.*, pp. 229, 233.]—This White Devil of Italy sets off a bad cause so speciously, and pleads with such an innocence-resembling boldness, that we seem to see that matchless beauty of her face which inspires such gay confidence into her, and are ready to expect, when she has done her pleadings, that her very judges, her accusers, the grave ambassadors who sit as spectators, and all the court, will rise and make proffer to defend her in spite of the utmost conviction of her guilt; as the Shepherds in Don Quixote make proffer to follow the beautiful Shepherdess Marcela, 'without [3]making any profit of her manifest resolution made there in their hearing.'

> So sweet and lovely does she make the shame,
> Which, like a canker in the fragrant rose,
> Does spot the beauty of her budding name!

I never saw any thing like the funeral dirge in this play, for the death of Marcello, except the ditty which reminds Ferdinand of his drowned father in the Tempest. As that is of the water, watery; so this is of the earth, earthy. Both have that intenseness of feeling, which seems to resolve itself into the [4]element which it contemplates.

In a note on the Spanish Tragedy in the Specimens [1808] I have said that there is nothing in the undoubted plays of Jonson which would authorize us to suppose that he could have supplied the additions to Hieronymo. I suspected the

[1] souls in bale.] souls in bale. What are 'Luke's iron crown', the brazen bull of Perillus, Procrustes' bed, to the waxen images which counterfeit death, to the wild masque of madmen, the tomb-maker, the bell-man, the living person's dirge, the mortification by degrees! 1808. [2] Inferior geniuses . . . is to be moved.] Writers of inferior genius . . . is capable of being moved. 1808. [3] making . . . of her] reaping . . . out of her 1808. [4] element] elements 1808.

agency of some more potent spirit. I thought that Webster might have furnished them. They seemed full of that wild, solemn, preternatural cast of grief which bewilders us in the Duchess of Malfy. On second consideration, I think this a hasty criticism. They are more like the overflowing griefs and talking distraction of Titus Andronicus. The sorrows of the Duchess set inward; if she talks, it is little more than soliloquy imitating conversation in a kind of bravery.

John Ford

The Broken Heart. [*S. D. P.*, p. 264.]—I do not know where to find, in any play, a catastrophe so grand, so solemn, and so surprising, as in this. This is indeed, according to Milton, to describe high passions and high actions. The fortitude of the Spartan boy, who let a beast gnaw out his bowels till he died without expressing a groan, is a faint bodily image of this dilaceration of the spirit, and exenteration of the inmost mind, which Calantha, with a holy violence against her nature, keeps closely covered, till the last duties of a wife and a queen are fulfilled. Stories of martyrdom are but of chains and the stake; a little bodily suffering. These torments

> On the purest spirits prey,
> As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
> With answerable pains, but more intense.

What a noble thing is the soul in its strengths and in its weaknesses! Who would be less weak than Calantha? Who can be so strong? The expression of this transcendant scene almost bears [1]us in imagination to Calvary and the Cross; and we seem to perceive some analogy between the scenical sufferings which we are here contemplating, and the real agonies of that final completion to which we dare no more than hint a reference. Ford was of the first order of poets. He sought for sublimity, not by parcels, in metaphors or visible images, but directly where she has her full residence in the heart of man; in the actions and sufferings of the greatest minds. There is a grandeur of the soul above mountains, seas, and the elements. Even in the poor

[1] us . . . we . . . we . . . we] me . . . I . . . I . . . I 1808.

perverted reason of Giovanni and Annabella, in the play[a] which [1]stands at the head of the modern collection of the works of this author, we discern traces of that fiery particle, which, in the irregular starting from [2]out the road of beaten action, discovers something of a right line even in obliquity, and shews hints of an improveable greatness in the lowest descents and degradations of our nature.

Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke

Alaham, Mustapha. [*S. D. P.*, p. 295.]—[3]The two tragedies of Lord Brooke, printed among his poems, might with more propriety have been termed political treatises than plays. Their author has strangely contrived to make passion, character, and interest, of the highest order, subservient to the expression of state dogmas and mysteries. He is nine parts Machiavel and Tacitus, for one part Sophocles or Seneca. In this writer's estimate of the [4]powers of the mind, the understanding must have held a most tyrannical pre-eminence. Whether we look into his plays, or his most passionate love-poems, we shall find all frozen and made rigid with intellect. The finest movements of the human heart, the utmost grandeur of which the soul is capable, are essentially comprised in the actions and speeches of Cælica and Camena. Shakspeare, who seems to have had a peculiar delight in contemplating womanly perfection, whom for his many sweet images of female excellence all women are in an especial manner bound to love, has not raised the ideal of the female character higher than Lord Brooke, in these two women, has done. But it requires a study equivalent to the learning of a new language to understand their meaning when they speak. It is indeed hard to hit :

> Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day
> Or seven though one should musing sit.

It is as if a being of pure intellect should take upon him

[a] 'Tis Pity she is a Whore.

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[1] stands . . . this author] precedes this 1808. [2] out] out of 1808.
[3] The two . . . his poems] These two Tragedies of Lord Brooke 1808.
[4] powers of the] faculties of his own 1808.

to express the emotions of our sensitive natures. There would be all knowledge, but sympathetic [1]expressions would be wanting.

Ben Jonson

The Case is Altered. [*S. D. P.*, p. 299.]—The passion for wealth has worn out much of its grossness [2]in tract of time. Our ancestors certainly conceived of money as able to confer a distinct gratification in itself, [3]not considered simply as a symbol of wealth. The old poets, when they introduce a miser, [4]make him address his gold as his mistress; as something to be seen, felt, and hugged; as capable of satisfying two of the senses at least. The substitution of a thin, unsatisfying medium [5]in the place of the good old tangible metal, has made avarice quite a Platonic affection in comparison with the seeing, touching, and handling-pleasures of the old Chrysophilites. A bank-note can no more satisfy the touch of a true sensualist in this passion, than Creusa could return her husband's embrace in the shades. See the Cave of Mammon in Spenser; Barabas's contemplation of his wealth in the [6]Rich Jew of Malta; Luke's raptures in the City [7]Madam; the idolatry and absolute gold-worship of the miser Jaques in this early comic production of Ben Jonson's. Above all hear Guzman, in that excellent old [8]translation of the Spanish Rogue, expatiate on the 'ruddy cheeks of your golden ruddocks, your Spanish pistolets, your plump and full-faced Portuguese, and your clear-skinned pieces of eight of Castile', which he and his fellows the beggars kept secret to themselves, and did 'privately enjoy in a plentiful manner'. 'For to have them, to pay them away, is not to enjoy them; to enjoy them, is to have them lying by us; having no other need of them than to use them for the clearing of the eye-sight, and the comforting of our senses. These we did carry about with us, sewing them in some patches of our doublets near unto the heart, and as close to the skin

[1] expressions] expression 1808. [2] in] by 1808. [3] not] not alone 1808. [4] make] constantly make 1808. [5] in the place . . . metal] for the good old tangible gold 1808. [6] Rich Jew] Jew 1808. [7] Madam . . . Ben Jonson's.] Madam, &c. 1808. [8] translation . . . Rogue] Spanish Novel, The Rogue 1808.

as we could handsomely quilt them in, holding them to be restorative.'

Poetaster. [*ibid.*, pp. 310, 326.]—This Roman play seems written to confute those enemies of [1]Ben in his own days and ours, who have said that he made a pedantical use of his learning. He has here revived the whole Court of Augustus, by a learned spell. We are admitted to the society of the illustrious dead. Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Tibullus, converse in our own tongue more finely and poetically than they [2]were used to express themselves in their native Latin. Nothing can be imagined more elegant, refined, and court-like, than the scenes between this Louis the Fourteenth of antiquity and his literati. The whole essence and secret of that kind of intercourse is contained therein. The economical liberality by which greatness, seeming to waive some part of its prerogative, takes care to lose none of the essentials; the prudential liberties of an inferior, which flatter by commanded boldness and soothe with [3]complimentary sincerity. [4]These, and a thousand beautiful passages from his New Inn, his Cynthia's Revels, and from those numerous court-masques and entertainments which he was in the daily habit of furnishing, might be adduced to shew the poetical fancy and elegance of mind of the supposed rugged old bard.

Alchemist. [*ibid.*, p. 333.]—The judgment is perfectly overwhelmed by the torrent of images, words, and book-knowledge, with which [5]Epicure Mammon (Act 2, Scene 2) confounds and stuns his incredulous hearer. They come pouring out like the successive [6]falls of Nilus. They 'doubly redouble strokes upon the foe'. Description outstrides proof. We are made to believe effects before we have testimony for their [7]causes. If there [8]is no one image which attains the height of the sublime, yet the confluence and assemblage of them all produces a result equal to the

[1] Ben] Ben Jonson 1808. [2] were used to express] expressed 1808. [3] complimentary] complimental 1808. [4] *For the* 1808 *text of this sentence* (*note on* The New Inn: *S. D. P.*, p. 326) *see Editor's Notes.* [5] Epicure . . . Scene 2)] Mammon 1808. [6] falls] strokes 1808. [7] causes.] causes: as a lively description of the joys of heaven sometimes passes for an argument to prove the existence of such a place. 1808. [8] is . . . attains] be . . . rises to 1808.

grandest poetry. [1]The huge Zerxean army countervails against single Achilles. Epicure Mammon is the most determined offspring of [2]its author. It has the whole 'matter and copy of the father—eye, nose, lip, the trick of his frown'. It is just such a swaggerer as contemporaries have described old Ben to be. Meercraft, Bobadil, the Host of the New Inn, have all his image and superscription. But Mammon is arrogant pretension personified. Sir Samson Legend, in Love for Love, is such another lying, overbearing character, but he does not come up to Epicure Mammon. What a 'towering bravery' there is in his sensuality! he affects no pleasure under a Sultan. It is as if 'Egypt with Assyria strove in luxury'.

George Chapman

Bussy D'Ambois, Byron's Conspiracy, Byron's Tragedy, &c. &c. [*S. D. P.*, p. 98.]—[3]Webster has happily characterised the 'full and heightened style' of Chapman, who, of all the English play-writers, perhaps approaches nearest to Shakspeare in the descriptive and didactic, in passages which are less purely [4]dramatic. He could not go out of himself, as Shakspeare could shift at pleasure, to inform and animate other existences, but in himself he had an eye to perceive and a soul to embrace all [5]forms and modes of being. He would have made a great epic poet, if indeed he has not abundantly shewn himself to be one; for his Homer is not so properly a translation as the stories of Achilles and Ulysses re-written. The earnestness and passion which he has put into every part of these poems, would be incredible to a reader of mere modern translations. His almost Greek zeal for the [6]glory of his heroes can only be paralleled by that fierce spirit of Hebrew bigotry, with

[1] The huge . . . Achilles] Zerxes' army that drank up whole rivers from their numbers may stand for single Achilles 1808. [2] its] the 1808. [3] Webster . . . perhaps approaches] The Selections which I have made from this Poet are sufficient to give an idea of that 'full and heightened style' which Webster makes characteristic of Chapman. Of all the English Playwriters, Chapman perhaps approaches 1808. [4] dramatic.] dramatic. Dramatic Imitation was not his talent. 1808. [5] forms and modes of being] forms. 1808. [6] glory. . . can only be] honor . . . is only 1808.

which Milton, as if personating one of the zealots of the old law, clothed himself when he sat down to paint the acts of Samson against the uncircumcised. The great obstacle to Chapman's translations being read, is their unconquerable quaintness. He pours out in the same breath the most just and natural, and the most violent and [1]crude expressions. He seems to [2]grasp at whatever words come first to hand [3]while the enthusiasm is upon him, as if all other must be inadequate to the divine meaning. But passion (the all in all in poetry) is every where present, raising the low, dignifying the mean, and putting sense into the absurd. He makes his readers glow, weep, tremble, take any affection which he pleases, be moved by words, or in spite of them, be disgusted and overcome their disgust.

Francis Beaumont.—John Fletcher

Maid's Tragedy. [*S. D. P.*, p. 351.]—One characteristic of the excellent old poets is, their being able to bestow grace upon subjects which naturally do not seem susceptible of any. I will mention two instances. Zelmane in the Arcadia of Sidney, and Helena in the All's Well that Ends Well of Shakspeare. What can be more unpromising at first sight, than the idea of a young man disguising himself in women's attire, and passing himself off for a woman among women; and [4]that for a long space of time? Yet Sir Philip has preserved [5]so matchless a decorum, that neither does Pyrocles' manhood suffer any stain for the effeminacy of Zelmane, nor is the respect due to the princesses at all diminished when the deception comes to be known. In the sweetly constituted mind of Sir Philip Sidney, it seems as if no ugly thought or unhandsome meditation could find a harbour. He turned all that he touched into images of honour and virtue. Helena in Shakspeare is a young woman seeking a man in marriage. The ordinary [6]rules of courtship are reversed, the habitual feelings are

[1] crude] forced 1808. [2] grasp at] grasp 1808. [3] while the enthusiasm is upon him] during the impetus of inspiration 1808. *For the close of this note, omitted here, see Editor's Notes.* [4] that] that too 1808. [5] so matchless a] such a matchless 1808. [6] rules . . . crossed] laws . . . violated 1808.

crossed. Yet with such exquisite address this dangerous subject is handled, that Helena's forwardness loses her no honour ; delicacy dispenses with its laws in her favour, and nature, in her single case, seems content to suffer a sweet violation. Aspatia, in the Maid's Tragedy, is a character equally difficult, with Helena, of being managed with grace. She too is a slighted woman, refused by the man who had once engaged to marry her. Yet it is artfully contrived, that while we [1]pity we respect her, and she descends without degradation. [2]Such wonders true poetry and passion can do, to confer dignity upon subjects which do not seem capable of it. But Aspatia must not be compared at all points with Helena ; she does not so absolutely predominate over her situation but she suffers some diminution, some abatement of the full lustre of the female character, which Helena never does. Her character has many degrees of sweetness, some of delicacy ; but it has weakness, which, if we do not despise, we are sorry for. After all, Beaumont and Fletcher were but an inferior sort of Shakspeares and Sidneys.

Philaster. [*ibid.*, p. 363.]—The character of Bellario must have been extremely popular in its day. For many years after the date of Philaster's first exhibition on the stage, scarce a play can be found without one of these women pages in it, following in the train of some pre-engaged lover, calling on the gods to bless her happy rival (his mistress), whom no doubt she secretly curses in her heart, giving rise to many pretty *equivoques* by the way on the confusion of sex, and either made happy at last by some surprising turn of fate, or dismissed with the joint pity of the lovers and the [3]audience. Donne has a copy of [4]verses to his mistress, dissuading her from a resolution which she seems to have taken up from some of these scenical representations, of following him abroad as a page. It is so earnest, so weighty, so rich in poetry, in sense, in wit, and

[1] pity we] pity her, we 1808. [2] Such wonders] So much 1808. [3] audience.] audience. Our ancestors seem to have been wonderfully delighted with these transformations of sex. Women's parts were then acted by young men. What an odd double confusion it must have made, to see a boy play a woman playing a man : one cannot disentangle the perplexity without some violence to the imagination. 1808. [4] verses] verses addrest 1808.

pathos, [1]that it deserves to be read as a solemn close in future to all such sickly fancies as he there [2]deprecates.

John Fletcher

Thierry and Theodoret. [*S. D. P.*, pp. 403, 408.]—The scene where Ordella offers her life a sacrifice, that the king of France may not be childless, I have always considered as the finest in [3]all Fletcher, and Ordella to be the most perfect notion of the female heroic character, next to Calantha in the Broken [4]Heart. She is a piece of sainted nature. Yet noble as the whole [5]passage is, it must be confessed that the manner of it, compared with Shakspeare's finest scenes, is [6]faint and languid. Its motion is circular, not progressive. Each line revolves on itself in a sort of separate orbit. They do not join into one another like a [7]running-hand. [8]Fletcher's ideas moved slow; his versification, though sweet, is tedious, it stops at every turn; he lays line upon line, making up one after the other, adding image to image so deliberately, that we see their junctures. Shakspeare mingles everything, runs line into line, embarrasses sentences and metaphors; before one idea has burst its shell, another is hatched and clamorous for disclosure. Another striking [9]difference between Fletcher and Shakspeare, is the fondness of the former for unnatural and violent [10]situations. He seems to have thought that nothing great could be produced in an ordinary way. The chief incidents in [11]some of his most admired

[1] that . . . read] that I have thought fit to insert it, 1808. [2] deprecates.] deprecates. The Story of his romantic and unfortunate marriage with the daughter of Sir George Moore, the Lady here supposed to be addrest, may be read in Walton's Lives [*Donne's* Elegy *follows. See Editor's Notes*] 1808. [3] all Fletcher . . . notion] Fletcher, and Ordella the most perfect idea 1808. [4] Heart.] Heart of Ford, that has been embodied in fiction. 1808. [5] passage] scene 1808. [6] faint] slow 1808. [7] running-hand.] running hand. Every step that we go we are stopped to admire some single object, like walking in beautiful scenery with a guide. This slowness I shall elsewhere have occasion to remark as characteristic of Fletcher. 1808. [8] Fletcher's ideas . . . disclosure *omit* 1808. [9] difference] difference perceivable 1808. [10] situations.] situations, like that in the scene before us. 1808. [11] some . . . tragedies] the Wife for a Month, in Cupid's Revenge, in the Double Marriage, and in many more of his Tragedies 1808.

tragedies shew this.[a] Shakspeare had nothing of this contortion in his mind, none of that craving after [1]violent situations, and flights of strained and improbable virtue, which I think always betrays an imperfect moral sensibility. The wit of Fletcher is excellent[b] like his serious scenes, but there is something strained and far-fetched in both. He is too mistrustful of Nature, he always goes a little on one side of her. Shakspeare chose her without a reserve: and had riches, power, understanding, and [2]length of days, with her, for a dowry.

Faithful Shepherdess. [*ibid.*, p. 383.]—If all the parts of this [3]delightful pastoral had been in unison with [4]its many innocent scenes and sweet lyric intermixtures, it had been a poem fit to vie with Comus or the Arcadia, to have been put into the hands of boys and virgins, to have made matter for young dreams, like the loves of Hermia and Lysander. But a spot is on the face of this [5]Diana. Nothing short of infatuation could have driven Fletcher upon [6]mixing with this 'blessedness' such an ugly deformity as Cloe, the wanton [7]shepherdess! If Cloe was meant to set off Clorin by contrast, Fletcher should have known that such weeds by juxta-position do not set off, but kill sweet flowers.

Philip Massinger.—Thomas Decker

The Virgin Martyr. [*S. D. P.*, p. 441.]—This [8]play has some beauties of so very high an order, that with all my respect for Massinger, I do not think he had poetical enthusiasm capable of [9]rising up to them. His associate Decker, who wrote Old Fortunatus, had poetry enough for any thing. The very impurities which obtrude themselves among the sweet pieties of this play, like Satan among

[a] Wife for a Month, Cupid's Revenge, Double Marriage, &c.
[b] Wit without Money, and his comedies generally.

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[1] violent situations] romantic incidents 1808. [2] length of days] long life 1808. [3] delightful pastoral] Play 1808. [4] its many] these 1808. [5] Diana] moon. [6] mixing] mixing up 1808. [7] shepherdess!] shepherdess! Coarse words do but wound the ears; but a character of lewdness affronts the mind. Female lewdness at once shocks nature and morality. 1808. [8] play has some] scene has 1808. [9] rising up to] furnishing 1808.

the Sons of [1]Heaven, have a strength of contrast, a raciness, and a glow, in them, which are [2]beyond Massinger. [3]They are to the religion of the rest what Caliban is to Miranda.

Philip Massinger.—Thomas Middleton.—William Rowley

Old Law. [*S. D. P.*, p. 453.]—There is an exquisiteness of moral sensibility, making [4]one's eyes to gush out tears of delight, and a poetical strangeness in [5]the circumstances of this [6]sweet tragi-comedy, which are unlike anything in the dramas which Massinger wrote alone. The pathos is of a subtler edge. Middleton and Rowley, who assisted in [7]it, had both of them finer geniuses than their associate.

James Shirley

[*S. D. P.*, p. 459.]

Claims a place amongst the worthies of this period, not so much for any transcendant [8]talent in himself, as that he was the last of a great race, all of whom spoke nearly the same language, and had a set of moral feelings and notions in common. A new language, and quite a new turn of tragic and comic interest, came in with the Restoration.

ON THE INCONVENIENCES RESULTING FROM BEING HANGED

[Composed 1810. Printed in *The Reflector*, No. II (January—March, 1811), Art. XII; reprinted in *Works*, 1818. Text unaltered.]

To the Editor of the Reflector

Sir,—I am one of those unhappy persons whose misfortunes, it seems, do not entitle them to the benefit of pure pity. All that is bestowed upon me of that kindest alleviator

[1] Heaven have] Heaven, and which the brief scope of my plan fortunately enables me to leave out, have 1808. [2] beyond] above 1808. [3] They . . . Miranda.] They set off the religion of the rest, somehow as Caliban serves to shew Miranda. 1808. [4] one's eyes] one 1808. [5] the] all the improbable 1808. [6] sweet tragi-comedy] wild play 1808. [7] it] this play. [8] talent] genius.

of human miseries, comes dashed with a double portion of contempt. My griefs have nothing in them that is felt as sacred by the bystanders. Yet is my affliction in truth of the deepest grain. The heaviest task that was ever given to mortal patience to sustain. Time, that wears out all other sorrows, can never modify or soften mine. Here they must continue to gnaw, as long as that fatal mark——

Why was I ever born ? Why was innocence in my person suffered to be branded with a stain which was appointed only for the blackest guilt? What had I done, or my parents, that a disgrace of mine should involve a whole posterity in infamy ? I am almost tempted to believe, that, in some pre-existent state, crimes to which this sublunary life of mine hath been as much a stranger as the babe that is newly born into it, have drawn down upon me this vengeance, so disproportionate to my actions on this globe.

My brain sickens, and my bosom labours to be delivered of the weight that presses upon it, yet my conscious pen shrinks from the avowal. But out it must——

O, Mr. Reflector ! guess at the wretch's misery who now writes this to you, when, with tears and burning blushes, he is obliged to confess, that he has been——————— HANGED——

Methinks I hear an involuntary exclamation burst from you, as your imagination presents to you fearful images of your correspondent unknown,—*hanged !*

Fear not, Mr. Editor. No disembodied spirit has the honour of addressing you. I am flesh and blood, an unfortunate system of bones, muscles, sinews, arteries, like yourself.

Then, I presume, you mean to be pleasant—That expression of yours, Mr. Correspondent, must be taken somehow in a metaphorical sense——

In the plainest sense, without trope or figure—Yes, Mr. Editor ! this neck of mine has felt the fatal noose,—these hands have tremblingly held up the corroborative prayer-book,—these lips have sucked the moisture of the last consolatory orange,—this tongue has chaunted the doleful cantata which no performer was ever called upon to repeat,—this face has had the veiling nightcap drawn over it———

But for no crime of mine.—Far be it from me to arraign the justice of my country, which, though tardy, did at length recognise my innocence. It is not for me to reflect upon judge or jury, now that eleven years have elapsed since the erroneous sentence was pronounced. Men will always be fallible, and perhaps circumstances did appear at the time a little strong——

Suffice it to say, that after hanging four minutes, (as the spectators were pleased to compute it,—a man that is being strangled, I know from experience, has altogether a different measure of time from his friends who are breathing leisurely about him,—I suppose the minutes lengthen as time approaches eternity, in the same manner as the miles get longer as you travel northward—), after hanging four minutes, according to the best calculation of the bystanders, a reprieve came, and I was cut DOWN——

Really I am ashamed of deforming your pages with these technical phrases—if I knew how to express my meaning shorter———

But to proceed.—My first care after I had been brought to myself by the usual methods, (those methods that are so interesting to the operator and his assistants, who are pretty numerous on such occasions,—but which no patient was ever desirous of undergoing a second time for the benefit of science), my first care was to provide myself with an enormous stock or cravat to hide the place—you understand me ;—my next care was to procure a residence as distant as possible from that part of the country where I had suffered. For that reason I chose the metropolis, as the place where wounded honour (I had been told) could lurk with the least danger of exciting enquiry, and stigmatised innocence had the best chance of hiding her disgrace in a crowd. I sought out a new circle of acquaintance, and my circumstances happily enabling me to pursue my fancy in that respect, I endeavoured, by mingling in all the pleasures which the town affords, to efface the memory of what I had undergone.

But alas ! such is the portentous and all-pervading chain of connection which links together the head and members of this great community, my scheme of lying perdu was defeated almost at the outset. A countryman of mine,

whom a foolish law-suit had brought to town, by chance met me, and the secret was soon blazoned about.

In a short time, I found myself deserted by most of those who had been my intimate friends. Not that any guilt was supposed to attach to my character. My officious countryman, to do him justice, had been candid enough to explain my perfect innocence. But, somehow or other, there is a want of strong virtue in mankind. We have plenty of the softer instincts, but the heroic character is gone. How else can I account for it, that of all my numerous acquaintance, among whom I had the honour of ranking sundry persons of education, talents, and worth, scarcely here and there one or two could be found, who had the courage to associate with a man that had been hanged.

Those few who did not desert me altogether, were persons of strong but coarse minds ; and from the absence of all delicacy in them I suffered almost as much as from the superabundance of a false species of it in the others. Those who stuck by me were the jokers, who thought themselves entitled by the fidelity which they had shewn towards me to use me with what familiarity they pleased. Many and unfeeling are the jests that I have suffered from these rude (because faithful) Achateses. As they past me in the streets, one would nod significantly to his companion and say, pointing to me, Smoke his cravat, and ask me if I had got a wen, that I was so solicitous to cover my neck. Another would enquire, What news from * * * Assizes ? (which you may guess, Mr. Editor, was the scene of my shame), and whether the sessions was like to prove a maiden one ? A third would offer to ensure me from drowning. A fourth would teaze me with enquiries how I felt when I was swinging, whether I had not something like a blue flame dancing before my eyes ? A fifth took a fancy never to call me anything but *Lazarus*. And an eminent book-seller and publisher,—who, in his zeal to present the public with new facts, had he lived in those days, I am confident, would not have scrupled waiting upon the person himself last mentioned, at the most critical period of his existence, to solicit a *few facts relative to resuscitation*,—had the modesty to offer me —— guineas per sheet, if I would write, in his

Magazine, a physiological account of my feelings upon coming to myself.

But these were evils which a moderate fortitude might have enabled me to struggle with. Alas ! Mr. Editor, the women,—whose good graces I had always most assiduously cultivated, from whose softer minds I had hoped a more delicate and generous sympathy than I found in the men,—the women began to shun me—this was the unkindest blow of all.

But is it to be wondered at ? How couldst thou imagine, wretchedest of beings, that that tender creature Seraphina would fling her pretty arms about that neck which previous circumstances had rendered infamous ? That she would put up with the refuse of the rope, the leavings of the cord ? Or that any analogy could subsist between the knot which binds true lovers, and the knot which ties malefactors ?

I can forgive that pert baggage Flirtilla, who, when I complimented her one day on the execution which her eyes had done, replied, that, to be sure, Mr. * * was a judge of those things. But from thy more exalted mind, Celestina, I expected a more unprejudiced decision.

The person whose true name I conceal under this appellation, of all the women that I was ever acquainted with, had the most manly turn of mind, which she had improved by reading and the best conversation. Her understanding was not more masculine than her manners and whole disposition were delicately and truly feminine. She was the daughter of an officer who had fallen in the service of his country, leaving his widow and Celestina, an only child, with a fortune sufficient to set them above want, but not to enable them to live in splendour. I had the mother's permission to pay my addresses to the young lady, and Celestina seemed to approve of my suit.

Often and often have I poured out my overcharged soul in the presence of Celestina, complaining of the hard and unfeeling prejudices of the world, and the sweet maid has again and again declared, that no irrational prejudice should hinder her from esteeming every man according to his intrinsic worth. Often has she repeated the consolatory assurance, that she could never consider as essentially ignominious an *accident*, which was indeed to be deprecated,

but which might have happened to the most innocent of mankind. Then would she set forth some illustrious example, which her reading easily furnished, of a Phocion or a Socrates unjustly condemned; of a Raleigh or a Sir Thomas More, to whom late posterity had done justice; and by soothing my fancy with some such agreeable parallel, she would make me almost to triumph in my disgrace, and convert my shame into glory.

In such entertaining and instructive conversations the time passed on, till I importunately urged the mistress of my affections to name a day for our union. To this she obligingly consented, and I thought myself the happiest of mankind. But how was I surprised one morning on the receipt of the following billet from my charmer :—

Sir,—You must not impute it to levity, or to a worse failing, ingratitude, if, with anguish of heart, I feel myself compelled by irresistible arguments to recall a vow which I fear I made with too little consideration. I never can be yours. The reasons of my decision, which is final, are in my own breast, and you must everlastingly remain a stranger to them. Assure yourself that I can never cease to esteem you as I ought.

Celestina.

At the sight of this paper, I ran in frantic haste to Celestina's lodgings, where I learned, to my infinite mortification, that the mother and daughter were set off on a journey to a distant part of the country, to visit a relation, and were not expected to return in less than four months.

Stunned by this blow, which left me without the courage to solicit an explanation by letter, even if I had known where they were, (for the particular address was industriously concealed from me), I waited with impatience the termination of the period, in the vain hope that I might be permitted to have a chance of softening the harsh decision by a personal interview with Celestina after her return. But before three months were at an end, I learned from the newspapers, that my beloved had—given her hand to another!

Heart-broken as I was, I was totally at a loss to account for the strange step which she had taken; and it was not

till some years after that I learned the true reason from a female relation of hers, to whom it seems Celestina had confessed in confidence, that it was no demerit of mine that had caused her to break off the match so abruptly, nor any preference which she might feel for any other person, for she preferred me (she was pleased to say) to all mankind; but when she came to lay the matter closer to her heart, she found that she never should be able to bear the sight (I give you her very words as they were detailed to me by her relation) the sight of a man in a nightcap, who had appeared on a public platform, it would lead to such a disagreeable association of ideas! And to this punctilio I was sacrificed.

To pass over an infinite series of minor mortifications, to which this last and heaviest might well render me callous, behold me here, Mr. Editor! in the thirty-seventh year of my existence, (the twelfth, reckoning from my re-animation), cut off from all respectable connections, rejected by the fairer half of the community,—who in my case alone seem to have laid aside the characteristic pity of their sex; punished because I was once punished unjustly; suffering for no other reason than because I once had the misfortune to suffer without any cause at all. In no other country, I think, but this, could a man have been subject to such a life-long persecution, when once his innocence had been clearly established.

Had I crawled forth a rescued victim from the rack in the horrible dungeons of the Inquisition,—had I heaved myself up from a half bastinado in China, or been torn from the just-entering, ghastly impaling stake in Barbary,—had I dropt alive from the knout in Russia, or come off with a gashed neck from the half-mortal, scarce-in-time-retracted scymetar of an executioneering slave in Turkey,—I might have borne about the remnant of this frame (the mangled trophy of reprieved innocence) with credit to myself, in any of those barbarous countries. No scorn, at least, would have mingled with the pity (small as it might be) with which what was left of me would have been surveyed.

The singularity of my case has often led me to enquire into the reasons of the general levity with which the subject of hanging is treated as a topic in this country. I say as

a topic : for let the very persons who speak so lightly of the thing at a distance be brought to view the real scene,—let the platform be bona fide exhibited, and the trembling culprit brought forth,—the case is changed ; but as a topic of conversation, I appeal to the vulgar jokes which pass current in every street. But why mention them, when the politest authors have agreed in making use of this subject as a source of the ridiculous ? Swift, and Pope, and Prior, are fond of recurring to it. Gay has built an entire drama upon this single foundation. The whole interest of the *Beggar's Opera* may be said to hang upon it. To such writers as Fielding and Smollet it is a perfect *bon bouche*.—Hear the facetious Tom Brown, in his *Comical View of London and Westminster*, describe the *Order of the Show at one of the Tyburn Executions* in his time :—' Mr. Ordinary visits his melancholy flock in Newgate by eight. Doleful procession up Holborn-hill about eleven. Men handsome and proper that were never thought so before, which is some comfort however. Arrive at the fatal place by twelve. Burnt brandy, women, and sabbath-breaking, repented of. Some few penitential drops fall under the gallows. Sheriff's men, parson, pickpockets, criminals, all very busy. The last concluding peremptory psalm struck up. Show over by one.'—In this sportive strain does this misguided wit think proper to play with a subject so serious, which yet he would hardly have done, if he had not known that there existed a predisposition in the habits of his unaccountable countrymen to consider the subject as a jest. But what shall we say to Shakspeare, who, (not to mention the solution which the *Gravedigger* in *Hamlet* gives of his fellow workman's problem), in that scene in *Measure for Measure*, where the *Clown* calls upon *Master Barnardine* to get up and be hanged, which he declines on the score of being sleepy, has actually gone out of his way to gratify this amiable propensity in his countrymen ; for it is plain, from the use that was to be made of his head, and from *Abhorson's* asking, ' is the axe upon the block, sirrah ? ' that beheading, and not hanging, was the punishment to which *Barnardine* was destined. But Shakspeare knew that the axe and block were pregnant with no ludicrous images, and therefore falsified the historic truth of his own drama (if I may so speak) rather than he

would leave out such excellent matter for a jest as the suspending of a fellow-creature in mid air has been ever esteemed to be by Englishmen.

One reason why the ludicrous never fails to intrude itself into our contemplations upon this mode of death, I suppose to be, the absurd posture into which a man is thrown who is condemned to dance, as the vulgar delight to express it, upon nothing. To see him whisking and wavering in the air,

> As the wind you know will wave a man;[a]

to behold the vacant carcase, from which the life is newly dislodged, shifting between earth and heaven, the sport of every gust; like a weather-cock, serving to shew from which point the wind blows; like a maukin, fit only to scare away birds; like a nest left to swing upon a bough when the bird is flown: these are uses to which we cannot without a mixture of spleen and contempt behold the human carcase reduced. We string up dogs, foxes, bats, moles, weasels. Man surely deserves a steadier death.

Another reason why the ludicrous associates more forcibly with this than with any other mode of punishment, I cannot help thinking to be, the senseless costume with which old prescription has thought fit to clothe the exit of malefactors in this country. Let a man do what he will to abstract from his imagination all idea of the whimsical, something of it will come across him when he contemplates the figure of a fellow-creature in the day-time (in however distressing a situation) in a nightcap. Whether it be that this nocturnal addition has something discordant with day-light, or that it is the dress which we are seen in at those times when we are 'seen', as the Angel in Milton expresses it, 'least wise;' this I am afraid will always be the case; unless indeed, as in my instance, some strong personal feeling overpower the ludicrous altogether. To me, when I reflect upon the train of misfortunes which have pursued me through life, owing to that accursed drapery, the cap presents as purely frightful an object as the sleeveless yellow coat and devil-painted mitre of the San Benitos.—An ancestor of mine, who suffered for his loyalty in the time of the civil wars, was so sensible

[a] Hieronimo in the Spanish tragedy.

of the truth of what I am here advancing, that on the morning of execution, no intreaties could prevail upon him to submit to the odious dishabille, as he called it, but he insisted upon wearing, and actually suffered in, the identical flowing periwig which he is painted in, in the gallery belonging to my uncle's seat in ——shire.

Suffer me, Mr. Editor, before I quit the subject, to say a word or two respecting the minister of justice in this country; in plain words, I mean the hangman. It has always appeared to me that, in the mode of inflicting capital punishments with us, there is too much of the ministry of the human hand. The guillotine, as performing its functions more of itself and sparing human agency, though a cruel and disgusting exhibition, in my mind, has many ways the advantage over *our way*. In beheading indeed, as it was formerly practised in England, and in whipping to death, as is sometimes practised now, the hand of man is no doubt sufficiently busy; but there is something less repugnant in these downright blows than in the officious barber-like ministerings of *the other*. To have a fellow with his hangman's hands fumbling about your collar, adjusting the thing as your valet would regulate your cravat, valuing himself on his menial dexterity——

I never shall forget meeting my rascal,—I mean the fellow who officiated for me,—in London last winter. I think I see him now,—in a waistcoat that had been mine —smirking along as if he knew me——

In some parts of Germany, that fellow's office is by law declared infamous, and his posterity incapable of being ennobled. They have hereditary hangmen, or had at least, in the same manner as they had hereditary other great officers of state; and the hangmen's families of two adjoining parishes intermarried with each other, to keep the breed entire. I wish something of the same kind were established in England.

But it is time to quit a subject which teems with disagreeable images——

Permit me to subscribe myself, Mr. Editor,

Your unfortunate friend,

PENSILIS.

ON THE DANGER OF CONFOUNDING MORAL WITH PERSONAL DEFORMITY; WITH A HINT TO THOSE WHO HAVE THE FRAMING OF ADVERTISEMENTS FOR APPREHENDING OFFENDERS

[Composed 1810. Printed in *The Reflector*, No. II (January—March, 1811), Art. XV; reprinted in *Works*, 1818. Text unchanged (but see below).]

To the Editor of the Reflector

Mr. Reflector,—There is no science in their pretensions to which mankind are more apt to commit grievous mistakes, than in the supposed very obvious one of physiognomy. I quarrel not with the principles of this science, as they are laid down by learned professors; much less am I disposed, with some people, to deny its existence altogether as any inlet of knowledge that can be depended upon. I believe that there is, or may be, an art to 'read the mind's construction in the face'. But, then, in every species of *reading*, so much depends upon the eyes of the reader; if they are blear, or apt to dazzle, or inattentive, or strained with too much attention, the optic power will infallibly bring home false reports of what it reads. How often do we say, upon a cursory glance at a stranger, what a fine open countenance he has, who, upon second inspection, proves to have the exact features of a knave. Nay, in much more intimate acquaintances, how a delusion of this kind shall continue for months, years, and then break up all at once.

Ask the married man, who has been so but for a short space of time, if those blue eyes where, during so many years of anxious courtship, truth, sweetness, serenity, seemed to be written in characters which could not be misunderstood—ask him if the characters which they now convey be exactly the same?—if for truth he does not *read* a dull virtue (the mimic of constancy) which changes not, only because it wants the judgment to make a preference?—if for sweetness he does not *read* a stupid habit of looking pleased at every thing;—if for serenity he does not *read* animal tranquillity, the dead pool of the heart, which no breeze of passion can stir into health? Alas! what is this book of the countenance good for, which when we have

read so long, and thought that we understood its contents, there comes a countless list of heart-breaking errata at the end !

But these are the pitiable mistakes to which love alone is subject. I have inadvertently wandered from my purpose, which was to expose quite an opposite blunder, into which we are no less apt to fall, through hate. How ugly a person looks upon whose reputation some awkward aspersion hangs, and how suddenly his countenance clears up with his character. I remember being persuaded of a man whom I had conceived an ill opinion of, that he had a very bad set of teeth ; which, since I have had better opportunities of being acquainted with his face and facts, I find to have been the very reverse of the truth. *That crooked old woman,* I once said, speaking of an ancient gentlewoman, whose actions did not square altogether with my notions of the rule of right. The unanimous surprise of the company before whom I uttered these words, soon convinced me that I had confounded mental with bodily obliquity, and that there was nothing tortuous about the old lady but her deeds.

This humour of mankind to deny personal comeliness to those with whose moral attributes they are dissatisfied, is very strongly shewn in those advertisements, which stare us in the face from the walls of every street, and, with the tempting bait which they hang forth, stimulate at once cupidity and an abstract love of justice in the breast of every passing peruser ; I mean, the advertisements offering rewards for the apprehension of absconded culprits, strayed apprentices, bankrupts who have conveyed away their effects, debtors that have run away from their bail. I observe, that in exact proportion to the indignity with which the prosecutor, who is commonly the framer of the advertisement, conceives he has been treated, the personal pretensions of the fugitive are denied, and his defects exaggerated.

A fellow, whose misdeeds have been directed against the public in general, and in whose delinquency no individual shall feel himself particularly interested, generally meets with fair usage. A coiner or a smuggler shall get off tolerably well. His beauty, if he has any, is not much underrated, his deformities are not much magnified. A run-away apprentice, who excites perhaps the next least

degree of spleen in his prosecutor, generally escapes with a pair of bandy legs ; if he has taken any thing with him in his flight, a hitch in his gait is generally superadded. A bankrupt, who has been guilty of withdrawing his effects, if his case be not very atrocious, commonly meets with mild usage. But a debtor who has left his bail in jeopardy, is sure to be described in characters of unmingled deformity. Here the personal feelings of the bail, which may be allowed to be somewhat poignant, are admitted to interfere ; and, as wrath and revenge commonly strike in the dark, the colours are laid on with a grossness which I am convinced must often defeat its own purpose. The fish that casts an inky cloud about him that his enemies may not find him, cannot more obscure himself by that device than the blackening representations of these angry advertisers must inevitably serve to cloak and screen the persons of those who have injured them from detection. I have before me at this moment one of these bills, which runs thus :—

'FIFTY POUNDS REWARD.

'Run away from his bail, John Tomkins, formerly resident in Princes-street, Soho, but lately of Clerkenwell. Whoever shall apprehend, or cause to be apprehended and lodged in one of his Majesty's jails, the said John Tomkins, shall receive the above reward. He is a thickset, sturdy man, about five foot six inches high, halts in his left leg, with a stoop in his gait, with coarse red hair, nose short and cocked up, with little grey eyes, one of them bears the effect of a blow which he has lately received, with a pot belly, speaks with a thick and disagreeable voice, goes shabbily drest, had on when he went away a greasy shag great coat with rusty yellow buttons.'

Now, although it is not out of the compass of possibility that John Tomkins aforesaid may comprehend in his agreeable person all the above-mentioned aggregate of charms ; yet, from my observation of the manner in which these advertisements are usually drawn up, though I have not the pleasure of knowing the gentleman, yet would I lay a wager, that an advertisement to the following effect would have a much better chance of apprehending and laying by the heels this John Tomkins than the above

description, although penned by one who, from the good services which he appears to have done for him, has not improbably been blessed with some years of previous intercourse with the said John. Taking, then, the above advertisement to be true, or nearly so, down to the words 'left leg' inclusive (though I have some doubt if the blemish there implied amount to a positive lameness, or be perceivable by any but the nearest friends of John) I would proceed thus :—'Leans a little forward in his walk, his hair thick and inclining to auburn, his nose of the middle size, a little turned up at the end, lively hazel eyes (the contusion, as its effects are probably gone off by this time, I judge better omitted) inclines to be corpulent, his voice thick but pleasing, especially when he sings, had on a decent shag great coat with yellow buttons.'

Now, I would stake a considerable wager (though by no means a positive man) that some such mitigated description would lead the beagles of the law into a much surer track for finding this ungracious varlet, than to set them upon a false scent after fictitious ugliness and fictitious shabbiness; though, to do those gentlemen justice, I have no doubt their experience has taught them in all such cases to abate a great deal of the deformity which they are instructed to expect; and has discovered to them, that the Devil's agents upon this earth, like their master, are far less ugly in reality than they are painted.

I am afraid, Mr. Reflector, that I shall be thought to have gone wide of my subject, which was to detect the practical errors of physiognomy, properly so called; whereas I have introduced physical defects, such as lameness, the effects of accidents upon a man's person, his wearing apparel, &c. as circumstances on which the eye of dislike, looking ascance, may report erroneous conclusions to the understanding. But if we are liable, through a kind, or an unkind passion, to mistake so grossly concerning things so exterior and palpable, how much more are we likely to err respecting those nicer and less perceptible hints of character in a face, whose detection [1] constitutes the triumph of the physiognomist.

To revert to those bestowers of unmerited deformity, the

[1] constitutes] constitute (*a grammatical slip*) 1811.

framers of advertisements for the apprehension of delinquents, a sincere desire of promoting the ends of public justice induces me to address a word to them on the best means of attaining those ends. I will endeavour to lay down a few practical, or rather negative, rules for their use, for my ambition extends no further than to arm them with cautions against the self-defeating of their own purposes :—

1. Imprimis, then, Mr. Advertiser ! If the culprit whom you are willing to recover be one to whom in times past you have shewn kindness, and been disposed to think kindly of him yourself, but he has deceived your trust, and has run away, and left you with a load of debt to answer for him,—sit down calmly, and endeavour to behold him through the spectacles of memory rather than of present conceit. Image to yourself, before you pen a tittle of his description, the same plausible, good-looking man who took you in ; and try to put away from your mind every intrusion of that deceitful spectre which perpetually obtrudes itself in the room of your former friend's known visage. It will do you more credit to have been deceived by such a one ; and depend upon it, the traitor will convey to the eyes of the world in general much more of that first idea which you formed (perhaps in part erroneous) of his physiognomy, than of that frightful substitute which you have suffered to creep in upon your mind and usurp upon it ; a creature which has no archetype except in your own brain.

2. If you be a master that have to advertise a runaway apprentice, though the young dog's faults are known only to you, and no doubt his conduct has been aggravating enough, do not presently set him down as having crooked ancles. He may have a good pair of legs, and run away notwithstanding. Indeed, the latter does rather seem to imply the former.

3. If the unhappy person against whom your laudable vengeance is directed be a thief, think that a thief may have a good nose, good eyes, good ears. It is indispensable to his profession that he be possessed of sagacity, foresight, vigilance ; it is more than probable, then, that he is endued with the bodily types or instruments of these qualities to some tolerable degree of perfectness.

4. If petty larceny be his offence, I exhort you, do not confound meanness of crime with diminutiveness of stature. These things have no connection. I have known a tall man stoop to the basest action, a short man aspire to the height of crime, a fair man be guilty of the foulest actions, &c.

5. Perhaps the offender has been guilty of some atrocious and aggravated murder. Here is the most difficult case of all. It is above all requisite, that such a daring violator of the peace and safety of society should meet with his reward, a violent and ignominious death. But how shall we get at him ? Who is there among us, that has known him before he committed the offence, that shall take upon him to say he can sit down coolly and pen a dispassionate description of a murderer ? The tales of our nursery,—the reading of our youth,—the ill-looking man that was hired by the Uncle to dispatch the Children in the Wood,—the grim ruffians who smothered the babes in the Tower,—the black and beetle-browed assassin of Mrs. Ratcliffe,—the shag-haired villain of Mr. Monk Lewis,—the Tarquin tread, and mill-stone dropping eyes, of Murder in Shakspeare,—the exaggerations of picture and of poetry,—what we have read and what we have dreamed of,—rise up and crowd in upon us such eye-scaring portraits of the man of blood, that our pen is absolutely forestalled ; we commence poets when we should play the part of strictest historians, and the very blackness of horror which the deed calls up, serves as a cloud to screen the doer. The fiction is blameless, it is accordant with those wise prejudices with which nature has guarded our innocence, as with impassable barriers, against the commission of such appalling crimes ; but meantime, the criminal escapes ; or if,—owing to that wise abatement in their expectation of deformity, which, as I hinted at before, the officers of pursuit never fail to make, and no doubt in cases of this sort they make a more than ordinary allowance,—if, owing to this or any accident, the offender is caught and brought to his trial, who that has been led out of curiosity to witness such a scene, has not with astonishment reflected on the difference between a real committer of a murder, and the idea of one which he has been collecting and heightening all his life out of books, dreams, &c. The fellow, perhaps, is a sleek, smug-looking man,

with light hair and eye-brows,—the latter by no means jutting out or like a crag,—and with none of those marks which our fancy had pre-bestowed upon him.

I find I am getting unawares too serious ; the best way on such occasions is, to leave off, which I shall do by generally recommending to all prosecuting advertisers not to confound crimes with ugliness ; or rather, to distinguish between that physiognomical deformity, which I am willing to grant always accompanies crime, and mere *physical ugliness*,—which signifies nothing, is the exponent of nothing, and may exist in a good or bad person indifferently.

CRITO.

ON THE AMBIGUITIES ARISING FROM PROPER NAMES

[Composed (first draft) February 1, 1806—see Letter to Wordsworth of that date. Printed in *The Reflector*, No. II (January–March, 1811), Art. XXI, entitled *Short Miscellaneous Pieces*. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

MR. REFLECTOR,—How oddly it happens that the same sound shall suggest to the minds of two persons hearing it ideas the most opposite ! I was conversing a few years since with a young friend upon the subject of poetry, and particularly that species of it which is known by the name of the Epithalamium. I ventured to assert, that the most perfect specimen of it in our language was the Epithalamium of Spenser upon his own marriage.

My young gentleman, who has a smattering of taste, and would not willingly be thought ignorant of any thing remotely connected with the belles lettres, expressed a degree of surprise, mixed with mortification, that he should never have heard of this poem, Spenser being an author with whose writings he thought himself peculiarly conversant.

I offered to show him the poem in the fine folio copy of the poet's works, which I have at home. He seemed pleased with the offer, though the mention of the folio seemed again to puzzle him. But presently after, assuming a grave look, he compassionately muttered to himself ' poor Spencer ',

There was something in the tone with which he spoke these words that struck me not a little. It was more like the accent with which a man bemoans some recent calamity that has happened to a friend, than that tone of sober grief with which we lament the sorrows of a person, however excellent, and however grievous his afflictions may have been, who has been dead more than two centuries. I had the curiosity to enquire into the reasons of so uncommon an ejaculation. My young gentleman, with a more solemn tone of pathos than before, repeated 'poor Spencer', and added, 'he has lost his wife.'

My astonishment at this assertion rose to such a height, that I began to think the brain of my young friend must be cracked, or some unaccountable reverie had gotten possession of it. But upon further explanation it appeared that the word 'Spenser',—which to you or me, Reader, in a conversation upon poetry too, would naturally have called up the idea of an old poet in a ruff, one Edmund Spenser, that flourished in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and wrote a poem called the *Fairy Queen*, with the *Shepherd's Calender*, and many more verses besides,—did in the mind of my young friend excite a very different and quite modern idea, namely, that of the Honourable William Spencer, one of the living ornaments, if I am not misinformed, of this present poetical era, A.D. 1811.

X. Y. Z.

ON THE GENIUS AND CHARACTER OF HOGARTH; WITH SOME REMARKS ON A PASSAGE IN THE WRITINGS OF THE LATE MR. BARRY

[Composed 1811. Printed in *The Reflector*, No. III (April—September, 1811), Art. VIII, signed 'L.' Reprinted as Lamb's in Nichols and Steevens' *Works of Hogarth*, 1817, vol. iii; *Works*, 1818. Text of 1818.]

One of the earliest and noblest enjoyments I had when a boy was in the contemplation of those capital prints by Hogarth, the *Harlot's* and *Rake's Progresses*, which, along with some others, hung upon the walls of a great hall in an

old-fashioned house in ——shire, and seemed the solitary tenants (with myself) of that antiquated and life-deserted apartment.

Recollection of the manner in which those prints used to affect me, has often made me wonder, when I have heard Hogarth described as a mere comic painter, as one whose chief ambition was to *raise a laugh*. To deny that there are throughout the prints which I have mentioned circumstances introduced of a laughable tendency, would be to run counter to the common notions of mankind; but to suppose that in their *ruling character* they appeal chiefly to the risible faculty, and not first and foremost to the very heart of man, its best and most serious feelings, would be to mistake no less grossly their aim and purpose. A set of severer Satires (for they are not so much Comedies, which they have been likened to, as they are strong and masculine Satires) less mingled with any thing of mere fun, were never written upon paper, or graven upon copper. They resemble Juvenal, or the satiric touches in Timon of Athens.

I was pleased with the reply of a gentleman, who being asked which book he esteemed most in his library, answered, —'Shakspeare': being asked which he esteemed next best, replied,—'Hogarth.' His graphic representations are indeed books: they have the teeming, fruitful, suggestive meaning of *words*. Other pictures we look at,—his prints we read.

In pursuance of this parallel, I have sometimes entertained myself with comparing the *Timon of Athens* of Shakspeare (which I have just mentioned) and Hogarth's *Rake's Progress* together. The story, the moral, in both is nearly the same. The wild course of riot and extravagance, ending in the one with driving the Prodigal from the society of men into the solitude of the deserts, and in the other with conducting the Rake through his several stages of dissipation into the still more complete desolations of the mad-house, in the play and in the picture are described with almost equal force and nature. The levee of the Rake, which forms the subject of the second plate in the series, is almost a transcript of Timon's levee in the opening scene of that play. We find a dedicating poet, and other similar characters, in both.

The concluding scene in the *Rake's Progress* is perhaps

superior to the last scenes of *Timon*. If we seek for something of kindred excellence in poetry, it must be in the scenes of Lear's beginning madness, where the King and the Fool and the Tom-o'-Bedlam conspire to produce such a medley of mirth checked by misery, and misery rebuked by mirth; where the society of those 'strange bed-fellows' which misfortunes have brought Lear acquainted with, so finely sets forth the destitute state of the monarch, while the lunatic bans of the one, and the disjointed sayings and wild but pregnant allusions of the other, so wonderfully sympathize with that confusion, which they seem to assist in the production of, in the senses of that 'child-changed father'.

In the scene in Bedlam, which terminates the *Rake's Progress*, we find the same assortment of the ludicrous with the terrible. Here is desperate madness, the overturning of originally strong thinking faculties, at which we shudder, as we contemplate the duration and pressure of affliction which it must have asked to destroy such a building;—and here is the gradual hurtless lapse into idiocy, of faculties, which at their best of times never having been strong, we look upon the consummation of their decay with no more of pity than is consistent with a smile. The mad taylor, the poor driveller that has gone out of his wits (and truly he appears to have had no great journey to go to get past their confines) for the love of *Charming Betty Careless*,—these half-laughable, scarce-pitiable objects take off from the horror which the principal figure would of itself raise, at the same time that they assist the feeling of the scene by contributing to the general notion of its subject:—

> Madness, thou chaos of the brain,
> What art, that pleasure giv'st, and pain?
> Tyranny of Fancy's reign!
> Mechanic Fancy, that can build
> Vast labyrinths and mazes wild,
> With rule disjointed, shapeless measure,
> Fill'd with horror, fill'd with pleasure!
> Shapes of horror, that would even
> Cast doubts of mercy upon heaven.
> Shapes of pleasure, that, but seen,
> Would split the shaking sides of spleen.[a]

[a] Lines inscribed under the plate.

Is it carrying the spirit of comparison to excess to remark, that in the poor kneeling weeping female, who accompanies her seducer in his sad decay, there is something analogous to Kent, or Caius, as he delights rather to be called, in *Lear*, —the noblest pattern of virtue which even Shakspeare has conceived,—who follows his royal master in banishment, that had pronounced *his* banishment, and forgetful at once of his wrongs and dignities, taking on himself the disguise of a menial, retains his fidelity to the figure, his loyalty to the carcass, the shadow, the shell and empty husk of Lear ?

In the perusal of a book, or of a picture, much of the impression which we receive depends upon the habit of mind which we bring with us to such perusal. The same circumstance may make one person laugh, which shall render another very serious ; or in the same person the first impression may be corrected by after-thought. The misemployed incongruous characters at the *Harlot's Funeral*, on a superficial inspection, provoke to laughter ; but when we have sacrificed the first emotion to levity, a very different frame of mind succeeds, or the painter has lost half his purpose. I never look at that wonderful assemblage of depraved beings, who, without a grain of reverence or pity in their perverted minds, are performing the sacred exteriors of duty to the relics of their departed partner in folly, but I am as much moved to sympathy from the very want of it in them, as I should be by the finest representation of a virtuous death-bed surrounded by real mourners, pious children, weeping friends,—perhaps more by the very contrast. What reflexions does it not awake, of the dreadful heartless state in which the creature (a female too) must have lived, who in death wants the accompaniment of one genuine tear. That wretch who is removing the lid of the coffin to gaze upon the corpse with a face which indicates a perfect negation of all goodness or womanhood— the hypocrite parson and his demure partner—all the fiendish group—to a thoughtful mind present a moral emblem more affecting than if the poor friendless carcass had been depicted as thrown out to the woods, where wolves had assisted at its obsequies, itself furnishing forth its own funeral banquet.

It is easy to laugh at such incongruities as are met together in this picture,—incongruous objects being of the very essence of laughter,—but surely the laugh is far different in its kind from that thoughtless species to which we are moved by mere farce and grotesque. We laugh when Ferdinand Count Fathom, at the first sight of the white cliffs of Britain, feels his heart yearn with filial fondness towards the land of his progenitors, which he is coming to fleece and plunder,—we smile at the exquisite irony of the passage,—but if we are not led on by such passages to some more salutary feeling than laughter, we are very negligent perusers of them in book or picture.

It is the fashion with those who cry up the great Historical School in this country, at the head of which Sir Joshua Reynolds is placed, to exclude Hogarth from that school, as an artist of an inferior and vulgar class. Those persons seem to me to confound the painting of subjects in common or vulgar life with the being a vulgar artist. The quantity of thought which Hogarth crowds into every picture, would alone *unvulgarize* every subject which he might choose. Let us take the lowest of his subjects, the print called *Gin Lane*. Here is plenty of poverty and low stuff to disgust upon a superficial view ; and accordingly, a cold spectator feels himself immediately disgusted and repelled. I have seen many turn away from it, not being able to bear it. The same persons would perhaps have looked with great complacency upon Poussin's celebrated picture of the *Plague of Athens*.[a] Disease and Death and bewildering Terror in *Athenian garments* are endurable, and come, as the delicate critics express it, within the 'limits of pleasurable sensation'. But the scenes of their own St. Giles's, delineated by their own countryman, are too shocking to think of. Yet if we could abstract our minds from the fascinating colours of the picture, and forget the coarse execution (in some respects) of the print, intended as it was to be a cheap plate, accessible to the poorer sort of people, for whose instruction it was done, I think we could have no hesitation in conferring the palm of superior genius upon Hogarth, comparing this work of his with Poussin's picture. There is more of imagination in it—that power which draws

[a] At the late Mr. Hope's, in Cavendish-square.

all things to one,—which makes things animate and inanimate, beings with their attributes, subjects and their accessaries, take one colour, and serve to one effect. Every thing in the print, to use a vulgar expression, *tells*. Every part is full of 'strange images of death'. It is perfectly amazing and astounding to look at. Not only the two prominent figures, the woman and the half-dead man, which are as terrible as any thing which Michael Angelo ever drew, but every thing else in the print contributes to bewilder and stupefy,—the very houses, as I heard a friend of mine express it, tumbling all about in various directions, seem drunk—seem absolutely reeling from the effect of that diabolical spirit of phrenzy which goes forth over the whole composition.—To shew the poetical and almost prophetical conception in the artist, one little circumstance may serve. Not content with the dying and dead figures, which he has strewed in profusion over the proper scene of the action, he shews you what (of a kindred nature) is passing beyond it. Close by the shell, in which, by direction of the parish beadle, a man is depositing his wife, is an old wall, which, partaking of the universal decay around it, is tumbling to pieces. Through a gap in this wall are seen three figures, which appear to make a part in some funeral procession which is passing by on the other side of the wall, out of the sphere of the composition. This extending of the interest beyond the bounds of the subject could only have been conceived by a great genius. Shakspeare, in his description of the painting of the Trojan War, in his *Tarquin and Lucrece*, has introduced a similar device, where the painter made a part stand for the whole :—

> For much imaginary work was there,
> Conceit deceitful, so compact, so kind,
> That for Achilles' image stood his spear,
> Grip'd in an armed hand; himself behind
> Was left unseen, save to the eye of mind:
> A hand, a foot, a face, a leg, a head,
> Stood for the whole to be imagined.

This he well calls *imaginary work*, where the spectator must meet the artist in his conceptions half way; and it is peculiar to the confidence of high genius alone to trust so much to spectators or readers. Lesser artists shew

every thing distinct and full, as they require an object to be made out to themselves before they can comprehend it.

When I think of the power displayed in this (I will not hesitate to say) sublime print, it seems to me the extreme narrowness of system alone, and of that rage for classification, by which, in matters of taste at least, we are perpetually perplexing instead of arranging our ideas, that would make us concede to the work of Poussin above-mentioned, and deny to this of Hogarth, the name of a grand serious composition.

We are for ever deceiving ourselves with names and theories. We call one man a great historical painter, because he has taken for his subjects kings or great men, or transactions over which time has thrown a grandeur. We term another the painter of common life, and set him down in our minds for an artist of an inferior class, without reflecting whether the quantity of thought shewn by the latter may not much more than level the distinction which their mere choice of subjects may seem to place between them; or whether, in fact, from that very common life a great artist may not extract as deep an interest as another man from that which we are pleased to call history.

I entertain the highest respect for the talents and virtues of Reynolds, but I do not like that his reputation should overshadow and stifle the merits of such a man as Hogarth, nor that to mere names and classifications we should be content to sacrifice one of the greatest ornaments of England.

I would ask the most enthusiastic admirer of Reynolds, whether in the countenances of his *Staring* and *Grinning Despair*, which he has given us for the faces of Ugolino and dying Beaufort, there be any thing comparable to the expression which Hogarth has put into the face of his broken-down rake in the last plate but one of the *Rake's Progress*,[a] where a letter from the manager is brought to him to say that his play 'will not do'? Here all is easy, natural, undistorted, but withal what a mass of woe is here accumulated!—the long history of a mis-spent life is compressed

[a] The first perhaps in all Hogarth for serious expression. That which comes next to it, I think, is the jaded morning countenance of the debauchee in the second plate of the *Marriage Alamode*, which lectures on the vanity of pleasure as audibly as any thing in Ecclesiastes.

into the countenance as plainly as the series of plates before had told it; here is no attempt at Gorgonian looks which are to freeze the beholder, no grinning at the antique bed-posts, no face-making, or consciousness of the presence of spectators in or out of the picture, but grief kept to a man's self, a face retiring from notice with the shame which great anguish sometimes brings with it,—a final leave taken of hope,—the coming on of vacancy and stupefaction,—a beginning alienation of mind looking like tranquillity. Here is matter for the mind of the beholder to feed on for the hour together,—matter to feed and fertilize the mind. It is too real to admit one thought about the power of the artist who did it.—When we compare the expression in subjects which so fairly admit of comparison, and find the superiority so clearly to remain with Hogarth, shall the mere contemptible difference of the scene of it being laid in the one case in our Fleet or King's Bench Prison, and in the other in the State Prison of Pisa, or the bed-room of a cardinal,—or that the subject of the one has never been authenticated, and the other is matter of history,—so weigh down the real points of the comparison, as to induce us to rank the artist who has chosen the one scene or subject (though confessedly inferior in that which constitutes the soul of his art) in a class from which we exclude the better genius (who has happened to make choice of the other) with something like disgrace? [a]

[a] Sir Joshua Reynolds, somewhere in his lectures, speaks of the *presumption* of Hogarth in attempting the grand style in painting, by which he means his choice of certain Scripture subjects. Hogarth's excursions into Holy Land were not very numerous, but what he has left us in this kind have at least this merit, that they have expression of *some sort or other* in them,—the *Child Moses before Pharaoh's Daughter*, for instance: which is more than can be said of Sir Joshua Reynolds's *Repose in Egypt*, painted for Macklin's Bible, where for a Madona he has substituted a sleepy, insensible, unmotherly girl, one so little worthy to have been selected as the Mother of the Saviour, that she seems to have neither heart nor feeling to entitle her to become a mother at all. But indeed the race of Virgin Mary painters seems to have been cut up, root and branch, at the Reformation. Our artists are too good Protestants to give life to that admirable commixture of maternal tenderness with reverential awe and wonder approaching to worship, with which the Virgin Mothers of L. da Vinci and Raphael (themselves by their divine countenances inviting men to worship) contemplate the union of the two natures in the person of their Heaven-born Infant.

The *Boys under Demoniacal Possession* of Raphael and Dominichino, by what law of classification are we bound to assign them to belong to the great style in painting, and to degrade into an inferior class the Rake of Hogarth when he is the Madman in the Bedlam scene? I am sure he is far more impressive than either. It is a face which no one that has seen can easily forget. There is the stretch of human suffering to the utmost endurance, severe bodily pain brought on by strong mental agony, the frightful obstinate laugh of madness,—yet all so unforced and natural, that those who never were witness to madness in real life, think they see nothing but what is familiar to them in this face. Here are no tricks of distortion, nothing but the natural face of agony. This is high tragic painting, and we might as well deny to Shakspeare the honours of a great tragedian, because he has interwoven scenes of mirth with the serious business of his plays, as refuse to Hogarth the same praise for the two concluding scenes of the *Rake's Progress*, because of the Comic Lunatics [a] which he has thrown into the one, or the Alchymist that he has introduced in the other, who is paddling in the coals of his furnace, keeping alive the flames of vain hope within the very walls of the prison to which the vanity has conducted him, which have taught the darker lesson of extinguished hope to the desponding figure who is the principal person of the scene.

It is the force of these kindly admixtures, which assimilates the scenes of Hogarth and of Shakspeare to the drama of real life, where no such thing as pure tragedy is to be found; but merriment and infelicity, ponderous crime and feather-light vanity, like twiformed births, disagreeing complexions of one [1]intertexture, perpetually unite to

[a] There are of madmen, as there are of tame,
All humour'd not alike. We have here some
So apish and fantastic, play with a feather;
And though 'twould grieve a soul to see God's image
So blemish'd and defac'd, yet do they act
Such antick and such pretty lunacies,
That, spite of sorrow, they will make you smile.
Others again we have, like angry lions,
Fierce as wild bulls, untameable as flies.
Honest Whore.

[1] intertexture] intexture 1811.

shew forth motley spectacles to the world. Then it is that the poet or painter shews his art, when in the selection of these comic adjuncts he chooses such circumstances as shall relieve, contrast with, or fall into, without forming a violent opposition to, his principal object. Who sees not that the Grave-digger in *Hamlet*, the Fool in *Lear*, have a kind of correspondency to, and fall in with, the subjects which they seem to interrupt, while the comic stuff in *Venice Preserved*, and the doggrel nonsense of the Cook and his poisoning associates in the *Rollo* of Beaumont and Fletcher, are pure, irrelevant, impertinent discords,—as bad as the quarrelling dog and cat under the table of the *Lord and the Disciples at Emmaus* of Titian ?

Not to tire the reader with perpetual reference to prints which he may not be fortunate enough to possess, it may be sufficient to remark, that the same tragic cast of expression and incident, blended in some instances with a greater alloy of comedy, characterizes his other great work, the *Marriage Alamode*, as well as those less elaborate exertions of his genius, the prints called *Industry and Idleness*, the *Distrest Poet*, &c. forming, with the *Harlot's* and *Rake's Progresses*, the most considerable if not the largest class of his productions,—enough surely to rescue Hogarth from the imputation of being a mere buffoon, or one whose general aim was only to *shake the sides*.

There remains a very numerous class of his performances, the object of which must be confessed to be principally comic. But in all of them will be found something to distinguish them from the droll productions of Bunbury and others. They have this difference, that we do not merely laugh at, we are led into long trains of reflection by them. In this respect they resemble the characters of Chaucer's *Pilgrims*, which have strokes of humour in them enough to designate them for the most part as comic, but our strongest feeling still is wonder at the comprehensiveness of genius which could crowd, as poet and painter have done, into one small canvas so many diverse yet co-operating materials.

The faces of Hogarth have not a mere momentary interest, as in caricatures, or those grotesque physiognomies which we sometimes catch a glance of in the street, and,

struck with their whimsicality, wish for a pencil and the power to sketch them down; and forget them again as rapidly,—but they are permanent abiding ideas. Not the sports of nature, but her necessary eternal classes. We feel that we cannot part with any of them, lest a link should be broken.

It is worthy of observation, that he has seldom drawn a mean or insignificant countenance.[a] Hogarth's mind was eminently reflective; and, as it has been well observed of Shakspeare, that he has transfused his own poetical character into the persons of his drama (they are all more or less *poets*) Hogarth has impressed a *thinking character* upon the persons of his canvas. This remark must not be taken universally. The exquisite idiotism of the little gentleman in the bag and sword beating his drum in the print of the *Enraged Musician*, would of itself rise up against so sweeping an assertion. But I think it will be found to be true of the generality of his countenances. The knife-grinder and Jew flute-player in the plate just mentioned may serve as instances instead of a thousand. They have intense thinking faces, though the purpose to which they are subservient by no means required it; but indeed it seems as if it was painful to Hogarth to contemplate mere vacancy or insignificance.

This reflection of the artist's own intellect from the faces of his characters, is one reason why the works of Hogarth, so much more than those of any other artist, are objects of meditation. Our intellectual natures love the mirror which gives them back their own likenesses. The mental eye will not bend long with delight upon vacancy.

Another line of eternal separation between Hogarth and the common painters of droll or burlesque subjects, with whom he is often confounded, is the sense of beauty, which in the most unpromising subjects seems never wholly to

[a] If there are any of that description, they are in his *Strolling Players*, a print which has been cried up by Lord Orford as the richest of his productions, and it may be, for what I know, in the mere lumber, the properties, and dead furniture of the scene, but in living character and expression it is (for Hogarth) lamentably poor and wanting; it is perhaps the only one of his performances at which we have a right to feel disgusted.

have deserted him. 'Hogarth himself,' says Mr. Coleridge,[a] from whom I have borrowed this observation, speaking of a scene which took place at Ratzeburg, 'never drew a more ludicrous distortion, both of attitude and physiognomy, than this effect occasioned: nor was there wanting beside it one of those beautiful female faces which the same Hogarth, *in whom the satirist never extinguished that love of beauty which belonged to him as a poet,* so often and so gladly introduces as the central figure in a crowd of humorous deformities, which figure (such is the power of true genius) neither acts nor is meant to act as a contrast; but diffuses through all, and over each of the group, a spirit of reconciliation and human kindness; and even when the attention is no longer consciously directed to the cause of this feeling, still blends its tenderness with our laughter: and *thus prevents the instructive merriment at the whims of nature, or the foibles or humours of our fellow-men, from degenerating into the heart-poison of contempt or hatred.*' To the beautiful females in Hogarth, which Mr. C. has pointed out, might be added, the frequent introduction of children (which Hogarth seems to have taken a particular delight in) into his pieces. They have a singular effect in giving tranquillity and a portion of their own innocence to the subject. The baby riding in its mother's lap in the *March to Finchley,* (its careless innocent face placed directly behind the intriguing time-furrowed countenance of the treason-plotting French priest) perfectly sobers the whole of that tumultuous scene. The boy mourner winding up his top with so much unpretending insensibility in the plate of the *Harlot's Funeral,* (the only thing in that assembly that is not a hypocrite) quiets and soothes the mind that has been disturbed at the sight of so much depraved man and woman kind.

I had written thus far, when I met with a passage in the writings of the late Mr. Barry, which, as it falls in with the *vulgar notion* respecting Hogarth, which this Essay has been employed in combating, I shall take the liberty to transcribe, with such remarks as may suggest themselves to me in the transcription; referring the reader for a full answer to that which has gone before.

[a] *The Friend,* No. XVI.

'Notwithstanding Hogarth's merit does undoubtedly entitle him to an honourable place amongst the artists, and that his little compositions, considered as so many dramatic representations, abounding with humour, character, and extensive observations on the various incidents of low, faulty, and vicious life, are very ingeniously brought together, and frequently tell their own story with more facility than is often found in many of the elevated and more noble inventions of Rafaelle, and other great men; yet it must be honestly confessed, that in what is called knowledge of the figure, foreigners have justly observed, that Hogarth is often so raw, and uninformed, as hardly to deserve the name of an artist. But this capital defect is not often perceivable, as examples of the naked and of elevated nature but rarely occur in his subjects, which are for the most part filled with characters, that in their nature tend to deformity; besides, his figures are small, and the jonctures, and other difficulties of drawing that might occur in their limbs, are artfully concealed with their cloaths, rags, &c. But what would atone for all his defects, even if they were twice told, is his admirable fund of invention, ever inexhaustible in its resources; and his satyr, which is always sharp and pertinent, and often highly moral, was (except in a few instances, where he weakly and meanly suffered his integrity to give way to his envy) seldom or never employed in a dishonest or unmanly way. Hogarth has been often imitated in his satyrical vein, sometimes in his humorous; but very few have attempted to rival him in his moral walk. The line of art pursued by my very ingenious predecessor and brother academician, Mr. Penny, is quite distinct from that of Hogarth, and is of a much more delicate and superior relish; he attempts the heart, and reaches it, whilst Hogarth's general aim is only to shake the sides: in other respects no comparison can be thought of, as Mr. Penny has all that knowledge of the figure and academical skill, which the other wanted. As to Mr. Bunbury, who had so happily succeeded in the vein of humour and caricatura, he has for some time past altogether relinquished it, for the more amiable pursuit of beautiful nature: this indeed is not to be wondered at, when we recollect that he has, in Mrs. Bunbury, so admirable an exemplar of the most finished grace

and beauty continually at his elbow. But (to say all that occurs to me on this subject) perhaps it may be reasonably doubted, whether the being much conversant with Hogarth's method of exposing meanness, deformity, and vice, in many of his works, is not rather a dangerous, or, at least, a worthless pursuit; which, if it does not find a false relish and a love of and search after satyr and buffoonery in the spectator, is at least not unlikely to give him one. Life is short, and the little leisure of it is much better laid out upon that species of art which is employed upon the amiable and the admirable, as it is more likely to be attended with better and nobler consequences to ourselves. These two pursuits in art may be compared with two sets of people with whom we might associate; if we give ourselves up to the Foots, the Kenricks, &c., we shall be continually busied and paddling in whatever is ridiculous, faulty, and vicious in life; whereas there are those to be found, with whom we should be in the constant pursuit and study of all that gives a value and a dignity to human nature.' [Account of a Series of Pictures in the Great Room of the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, at the Adelphi, by James Barry, R.A., Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy; reprinted in the last quarto edition of his works.]

'——it must be honestly confessed, that in what is called knowledge of the figure, foreigners have justly observed,' &c.

It is a secret well known to the professors of the art and mystery of criticism, to insist upon what they do not find in a man's works, and to pass over in silence what they do. That Hogarth did not draw the naked figure so well as Michael Angelo might be allowed, especially as 'examples of the naked', as Mr. Barry acknowledges, 'rarely (he might almost have said never) occur in his subjects'; and that his figures under their draperies do not discover all the fine graces of an Antinous or an Apollo, may be conceded likewise; perhaps it was more suitable to his purpose to represent the average forms of mankind in the mediocrity (as Mr. Burke expresses it) of the age in which he lived: but that his figures in general, and in his best subjects, are so glaringly incorrect as is here insinuated, I dare trust my own eye so far as positively to deny the fact. And there is one part of the figure in which Hogarth is allowed to have

excelled, which these foreigners seem to have overlooked, or perhaps calculating from its proportion to the whole (a seventh or an eighth, I forget which) deemed it of trifling importance; I mean the human face; a small part, reckoning by geographical inches, in the map of man's body, but here it is that the painter of expression must condense the wonders of his skill, even at the expense of neglecting the 'jonctures and other difficulties of drawing in the limbs', which it must be a cold eye that in the interest so strongly demanded by Hogarth's countenances has leisure to survey and censure.

'The line of art pursued by my very ingenious predecessor and brother academician, Mr. Penny.'

The first impression caused in me by reading this passage, was an eager desire to know who this Mr. Penny was. This great surpasser of Hogarth in the 'delicacy of his relish', and the 'line which he pursued', where is he, what are his works, what has he to shew? In vain I tried to recollect, till by happily putting the question to a friend who is more conversant in the works of the illustrious obscure than myself, I learnt that he was the painter of a *Death of Wolfe* which missed the prize the year that the celebrated picture of West on the same subject obtained it; that he also made a picture of the *Marquis of Granby relieving a Sick Soldier;* moreover, that he was the inventor of two pictures of *Suspended and Restored Animation,* which I now remember to have seen in the Exhibition some years since, and the prints from which are still extant in good men's houses. This then I suppose is the line of subjects in which Mr. Penny was so much superior to Hogarth. I confess I am not of that opinion. The relieving of poverty by the purse, and the restoring a young man to his parents by using the methods prescribed by the Humane Society, are doubtless very amiable subjects, pretty things to teach the first rudiments of humanity; they amount to about as much instruction as the stories of good boys that give away their custards to poor beggar-boys in children's [1]books. But, good God! is this *milk for babes* to be set up in opposition to Hogarth's moral scenes, his *strong meat for men?* As well might we prefer the fulsome verses upon

[1] books.] Books, or the tale of Carlo the Dog. 1811.

their own goodness, to which the gentlemen of the Literary Fund annually sit still with such shameless patience to listen, to the satires of Juvenal and Persius; because the former are full of tender images of Worth relieved by Charity, and Charity stretching out her hand to rescue sinking Genius, and the theme of the latter is men's crimes and follies with their black consequences—forgetful meanwhile of those strains of moral pathos, those sublime heart-touches, which these poets (in *them* chiefly shewing themselves poets) are perpetually darting across the otherwise appalling gloom of their subject—consolatory remembrancers, when their pictures of guilty mankind have made us even to despair for our species, that there is such a thing as virtue and moral dignity in the world, that her unquenchable spark is not utterly out—refreshing admonitions, to which we turn for shelter from the too great heat and asperity of the general satire.

And is there nothing analogous to this in Hogarth? nothing which 'attempts and reaches the heart'?—no aim beyond that of 'shaking the sides'?—If the kneeling ministering female in the last scene of the *Rake's Progress*, the Bedlam scene, of which I have spoken before, and have dared almost to parallel it with the most absolute idea of Virtue which Shakspeare has left us, be not enough to disprove the assertion; if the sad endings of the Harlot and the Rake, the passionate heart-bleeding entreaties for forgiveness which the adulterous wife is pouring forth to her assassinated and dying lord in the last scene but one of the *Marriage Alamode*,—if these be not things to touch the heart, and dispose the mind to a meditative tenderness: is there nothing sweetly conciliatory in the mild, patient face and gesture with which the wife seems to allay and ventilate the feverish irritated feelings of her poor poverty-distracted mate (the true copy of the *genus irritabile*) in the print of the *Distrest Poet?* or if an image of maternal love be required where shall we find a sublimer view of it than in that aged woman in *Industry and Idleness* (plate v.) who is clinging with the fondness of hope not quite extinguished to her brutal vice-hardened child, whom she is accompanying to the ship which is to bear him away from his native soil, of which he has been adjudged unworthy: in whose shocking face

every trace of the human countenance seems obliterated, and a brute beast's to be left instead, shocking and repulsive to all but her who watched over it in its cradle before it was so sadly altered, and feels it must belong to her while a pulse by the vindictive laws of his country shall be suffered to continue to beat in it. Compared with such things, what is Mr. Penny's 'knowledge of the figure and academical skill which Hogarth wanted'?

With respect to what follows concerning another gentleman, with the congratulations to him on his escape out of the regions of 'humour and caricatura', in which it appears he was in danger of travelling side by side with Hogarth, I can only congratulate my country, that Mrs. Hogarth knew *her* province better than by disturbing her husband at his pallet to divert him from that universality of subject, which has stamped him perhaps, next to Shakspeare, the most inventive genius which this island has produced, into the 'amiable pursuit of beautiful nature', *i.e.* copying ad infinitum the individual charms and graces of Mrs. H——.

'Hogarth's method of exposing meanness, deformity, and vice, paddling in whatever is ridiculous, faulty, and vicious.'

A person unacquainted with the works thus stigmatised, would be apt to imagine, that in Hogarth there was nothing else to be found but subjects of the coarsest and most repulsive nature. That his imagination was naturally unsweet, and that he delighted in raking into every species of moral filth. That he preyed upon sore places only, and took a pleasure in exposing the unsound and rotten parts of human nature;—whereas, with the exception of some of the plates of the *Harlot's Progress*, which are harder in their character than any of the rest of his productions, (the *Stages of Cruelty* I omit as mere worthless caricaturas, foreign to his general habits, the offspring of his fancy in some wayward humour), there is scarce one of his pieces where vice is most strongly satirised, in which some figure is not introduced upon which the moral eye may rest satisfied; a face that indicates goodness, or perhaps mere good humouredness and carelessness of mind (negation of evil) only, yet enough to give a relaxation to the frowning brow of satire, and keep the general air from tainting. Take the mild, supplicating posture of patient Poverty in the

poor woman that is persuading the pawnbroker to accept her clothes in pledge, in the plate of *Gin Lane*, for an instance. A little does it, a little of the *good* nature overpowers a world of *bad*. One cordial honest laugh of a Tom Jones absolutely clears the atmosphere that was reeking with the black putrifying breathings of a hypocrite Blifil. One homely expostulating shrug from Strap, warms the whole air which the suggestions of a gentlemanly ingratitude from his friend Random had begun to freeze. One 'Lord bless us!' of Parson Adams upon the wickedness of the times, exorcises and purges off the mass of iniquity which the world-knowledge of even a Fielding could cull out and rake together. But of the severer class of Hogarth's performances, enough, I trust, has been said to shew that they do not merely shock and repulse; that there is in them the 'scorn of vice' and the 'pity' too; something to touch the heart, and keep alive the sense of moral beauty; the 'lacrymæ rerum', and the sorrowing by which the heart is made better. If they be bad things, then is satire and tragedy a bad thing; let us proclaim at once an age of gold, and sink the existence of vice and misery in our speculations; let us

> —— wink, and shut our apprehensions up
> From common sense of what men were and are:

let us *make believe* with the children that every body is good and happy; and, with Dr. Swift, write panegyrics upon the world.

But that larger half of Hogarth's works which were painted more for entertainment than instruction (though such was the suggestiveness of his mind, that there is always something to be learnt from them) his humourous scenes,—are they such as merely to disgust and set us against our species?

The confident assertions of such a man as I consider the late Mr. Barry to have been, have that weight of authority in them which staggers, at first hearing, even a long preconceived opinion. When I read his pathetic admonition concerning the shortness of life, and how much better the little leisure of it were laid out upon 'that species of art which is employed about the amiable and the admirable'; and Hogarth's 'method' proscribed as a 'dangerous or worth-

less pursuit', I began to think there was something in it; that I might have been indulging all my life a passion for the works of this artist, to the utter prejudice of my taste and moral sense; but my first convictions gradually returned, a world of good-natured English faces came up one by one to my recollection, and a glance at the matchless *Election Entertainment*, which I have the happiness to have hanging up in my parlour, subverted Mr. Barry's whole theory in an instant.

In that inimitable print, (which in my judgment as far exceeds the more known and celebrated *March to Finchley*, as the best comedy exceeds the best farce that ever was written,) let a person look till he be saturated, and when he has done wondering at the inventiveness of genius which could bring so many characters (more than thirty distinct classes of face) into a room, and set them down at table together, or otherwise dispose them about, in so natural a manner, engage them in so many easy sets and occupations, yet all partaking of the spirit of the occasion which brought them together, so that we feel that nothing but an election time could have assembled them; having no central figure or principal group, (for the hero of the piece, the Candidate, is properly set aside in the levelling indistinction of the day, one must look for him to find him) nothing to detain the eye from passing from part to part, where every part is alike instinct with life,—for here are no furniture-faces, no figures brought in to fill up the scene like stage choruses, but all dramatis personæ: when he shall have done wondering at all these faces so strongly charactered, yet finished with the accuracy of the finest miniature; when he shall have done admiring the numberless appendages of the scene, those gratuitous doles which rich genius flings into the heap when it has already done enough, the over-measure which it delights in giving, as if its stores were exhaustless; the dumb rhetoric of the scenery—for tables, and chairs, and joint-stools in Hogarth, are living and significant things; the witticisms that are expressed by words, (all artists but Hogarth have failed when they have endeavoured to combine two mediums of expression, and have introduced words into their pictures), and the unwritten numberless little allusive pleasantries that are scattered about; the work

that is going on in the scene, and beyond it, as is made visible to the 'eye of mind', by the mob which choaks up the door-way, and the sword that has forced an entrance before its master: when he shall have sufficiently admired this wealth of genius, let him fairly say what is the *result* left on his mind. Is it an impression of the vileness and worthlessness of his species? or is not the general feeling which remains, after the individual faces have ceased to act sensibly on his mind, a *kindly one in favour of his species?* was not the general air of the whole scene wholesome? did it do the heart hurt to be among it? Something of a riotous spirit to be sure is there, some worldly-mindedness in some of the faces, a Doddingtonian smoothness which does not promise any superfluous degree of sincerity in the fine gentleman who has been the occasion of calling so much good company together: but is not the general cast of expression in the faces, of the good sort? do they not seem cut out of the *good old rock*, substantial English honesty? would one fear treachery among characters of their expression? or shall we call their honest mirth and seldom-returning relaxation by the hard names of vice and profligacy? That poor country fellow, that is grasping his staff (which, from that difficulty of feeling themselves at home which poor men experience at a feast, he has never parted with since he came into the room), and is enjoying with a relish that seems to fill all the capacities of his soul the slender joke, which that facetious wag his neighbour is practising upon the gouty gentleman, whose eyes the effort to suppress pain has made as round as rings—does it shock the 'dignity of human nature' to look at that man, and to sympathise with him in the seldom-heard joke which has unbent his care-worn hard-working visage, and drawn iron smiles from it? or with that full-hearted cobler who is honouring with the grasp of an honest fist the unused palm of that annoyed patrician, whom the licence of the time has seated next him?

I can see nothing 'dangerous' in the contemplation of such scenes as this, or the *Enraged Musician*, or the *Southwark Fair*, or twenty other pleasant prints which come crowding in upon my recollection, in which the restless activities, the diversified bents and humours, the blameless

peculiarities of men, as they deserve to be called, rather than their 'vices and follies', are held up in a laughable point of view. All laughter is not of a dangerous or soul-hardening tendency. There is the petrifying sneer of a demon which excludes and kills Love, and there is the cordial laughter of a man which implies and cherishes it. What heart was ever made the worse by joining in a hearty laugh at the simplicities of Sir Hugh Evans or Parson Adams, where a sense of the ridiculous mutually kindles and is kindled by a perception of the amiable? That tumultuous harmony of singers that are roaring out the words, 'The world shall bow to the Assyrian throne,' from the opera of *Judith,* in the third plate of the series, called the *Four Groups of Heads;* which the quick eye of Hogarth must have struck off in the very infancy of the rage for sacred oratorios in this country, while 'Music yet was young'; when we have done smiling at the deafening distortions, which these tearers of devotion to rags and tatters, these takers of Heaven by storm, in their boisterous mimicry of the occupation of angels, are making,—what unkindly impression is left behind, or what more of harsh or contemptuous feeling, than when we quietly leave Uncle Toby and Mr. Shandy riding their hobby-horses about the room? The conceited long-backed Sign-painter, that with all the self-applause of a Raphael or Corregio (the twist of body which his conceit has thrown him into has something of the Corregiesque in it) is contemplating the picture of a bottle which he is drawing from an actual bottle that hangs beside him, in the print of *Beer Street,*—while we smile at the enormity of the self-delusion, can we help loving the good humour and self-complacency of the fellow? would we willingly wake him from his dream?

I say not that all the ridiculous subjects of Hogarth have necessarily something in them to make us like them; some are indifferent to us, some in their natures repulsive, and only made interesting by the wonderful skill and truth to nature in the painter; but I contend that there is in most of them that sprinkling of the better nature, which, like holy water, chases away and disperses the contagion of the bad. They have this in them besides, that they bring us acquainted with the every-day human face,—they give us

skill to detect those gradations of sense and virtue (which escape the careless or fastidious observer) in the countenances of the world about us; and prevent that disgust at common life, that *tædium quotidianarum formarum*, which an unrestricted passion for ideal forms and beauties is in danger of producing. In this, as in many other things, they are analogous to the best novels of Smollett or Fielding.

ON THE CUSTOM OF HISSING AT THE THEATRES, WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF A CLUB OF DAMNED AUTHORS

[Composed 1811. Printed in *The Reflector*, No. III (April—Sept., 1811), Art. XI. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

Mr. Reflector, I am one of those persons whom the world has thought proper to designate by the title of Damned Authors. In that memorable season of dramatic failures, 1806–7, in which no fewer, I think, than two tragedies, four comedies, one opera, and three farces, suffered at Drury-lane theatre, I was found guilty of constructing an afterpiece, and was *damned*.

Against the decision of the public in such instances there can be no appeal. The Clerk of Chatham might as well have protested against the decision of Cade and his followers, who were then *the public*. Like him I was condemned, because I could write.

Not but it did appear to some of us, that the measures of the popular tribunal at that period savoured a little of harshness and of the *summum jus*. The public mouth was early in the season fleshed upon the *Vindictive Man*, and some pieces of that nature, and it retained through the remainder of it a relish of blood. As Dr. Johnson would have said; Sir, there was a habit of sibilation in the house.

Still less am I disposed to inquire into the reason of the comparative lenity, on the other hand, with which some pieces were treated, which, to indifferent judges, seemed at least as much deserving of condemnation as some of those which met with it. I am willing to put a favourable construction upon the votes that were given against us; I

believe that there was no bribery or designed partiality in the case;—only 'our nonsense did not happen to suit their nonsense'; that was all.

But against the *manner* in which the public on these occasions think fit to deliver their disapprobation, I must and ever will protest.

Sir, imagine——but you have been present at the damning of a piece——those who never had that felicity, I beg them to imagine—a vast theatre, like that which Drury-lane was, before it was a heap of dust and ashes (I insult not over its fallen greatness, let it recover itself when it can for me, let it lift up its towering head once more, and take in poor authors to write for it, hic cœstus artemque repono)—a theatre like that, filled with all sorts of disgusting sounds,—shrieks, groans, hisses, but chiefly the last, like the noise of many waters, or that which Don Quixote heard from the fulling mills, or that wilder combination of devilish sounds which St. Anthony listened to in the wilderness.

O, Mr. Reflector, is it not a pity, that the sweet human voice, which was given man to speak with, to sing with, to whisper tones of love in, to express compliance, to convey a favour, or to grant a suit—that voice, which in a Siddons, or a Braham, rouses us, in a Syren Catalani charms and captivates us,—that the musical, expressive human voice should be converted into a rival of the noises of silly geese, and irrational venomous snakes!

I shall never forget the sounds on *my night;* I never before that time fully felt the reception which the Author of All Ill in the Paradise Lost meets with from the critics in the *pit*, at the final close of his Tragedy upon the Human Race—though that, alas! met with too much success—

> ——from innumerable tongues,
> A dismal universal *hiss*, the sound
> Of public scorn.—Dreadful was the din
> Of *hissing* through the hall, thick swarming now
> With complicated monsters, head and tail,
> Scorpion and asp, and Amphisbœna dire,
> Cerastes horn'd, Hydrus, and Elops drear,
> And Dipsas.

For hall substitute theatre, and you have the very image of what takes place at what is called the *damnation* of a

piece,—and properly so called; for here you see its origin plainly, whence the custom was derived, and what the first piece was that so suffered. After this none can doubt the propriety of the appellation.

But, sir, as to the justice of bestowing such appalling, heart-withering denunciations of the popular obloquy, upon the venial mistake of a poor author, who thought to please us in the act of filling his pockets,—for the sum of his demerits amounts to no more than that,—it does, I own, seem to me a species of retributive justice, far too severe for the offence. A culprit in the pillory (bate the eggs) meets with no severer exprobration.

Indeed, I have often wondered that some modest critic has not proposed, that there should be a wooden machine to that effect erected in some convenient part of the proscenium, which an unsuccessful author should be required to mount, and stand his hour, exposed to the apples and oranges of the pit;—this amende honorable would well suit with the meanness of some authors, who in their prologues fairly prostrate their sculls to the Audience, and seem to invite a pelting.

Or why should they not have their pens publicly broke over their heads, as the swords of recreant knights in old times were, and an oath administered to them that they should never write again.

Seriously, *Messieurs the Public*, this outrageous way which you have got of expressing your displeasures, is too much for the occasion. When I was deafening under the effects of it, I could not help asking, what crime of great moral turpitude I had committed: for every man about me seemed to feel the offence as personal to himself, as something which public interest and private feelings alike called upon him in the strongest possible manner to stigmatise with infamy.

The Romans, it is well known to you, Mr. Reflector, took a gentler method of marking their disapprobation of an author's work. They were a humane and equitable nation. —They left the furca and the patibulum, the axe and the rods, to great offenders: for these minor, and (if I may so term them) extra-moral offences, the *bent thumb* was considered as a sufficient sign of disapprobation, *vertere pollicem;*

as the *pressed thumb, premere pollices,* was a mark of approving.

And really there seems to have been a sort of fitness in this method, a correspondency of sign in the punishment to the offence; for as the action of *writing* is performed by bending the thumb forward, the retroversion, or bending back of that joint, did not unaptly point to the *opposite of that action,* implying, that it was the will of the audience that the author should *write no more.* A much more significant, as well as more humane, way of expressing that desire, than our custom of hissing, which is altogether senseless and indefensible. Nor do we find that the Roman audiences deprived themselves, by this lenity, of any tittle of that supremacy which audiences in all ages have thought themselves bound to maintain over such as have been candidates for their applause. On the contrary, by this method they seem to have had the author, as we should express it, completely *under finger and thumb.*

The provocations to which a dramatic genius is exposed from the public are so much the more vexatious, as they are removed from any possibility of retaliation, the hope of which sweetens most other injuries :—for the public *never writes itself.*—Not but something very like it took place at the time of the O.P. differences. The placards which were nightly exhibited, were, properly speaking, the composition of the public.—The public wrote them, the public applauded them, and precious morceaus of wit and eloquence they were; except some few, of a better quality, which it is well known were furnished by professed dramatic writers. After this specimen of what the public can do for itself, it should be a little slow in condemning what others do for it.

As the degrees of malignancy vary in people according as they have more or less of the Old Serpent (the father of hisses) in their composition, I have sometimes amused myself with analyzing this many-headed hydra, which calls itself the public, into the component parts of which it is 'complicated, head and tail', and seeing how many varieties of the snake kind it can afford.

First, there is the Common English Snake.—This is that part of the auditory who are always the majority at damnations, but who, having no critical venom in themselves to

sting them on, stay till they hear others hiss, and then join in for company.

The Blind Worm is a species very nearly allied to the foregoing. Some naturalists have doubted whether they are not the same.

The Rattle Snake.—These are your obstreperous talking critics,—the impertinent guides of the pit,—who will not give a plain man leave to enjoy an evening's entertainment, but with their frothy jargon, and incessant finding of faults, either drown his pleasure quite, or force him in his own defence to join in their clamorous censure. The hiss always originates with these. When this creature springs his *rattle*, you would think, from the noise it makes, there was something in it; but you have only to examine the instrument from which the noise proceeds, and you will find it typical of a critic's tongue,—a shallow membrane, empty, voluble, and seated in the most contemptible part of the creature's body.

The Whip Snake.—This is he that lashes the poor author the next day in the newspapers.

The Deaf Adder, or Surda Echidna of Linnæus.—Under this head may be classed all that portion of the spectators (for audience they properly are not) who not finding the first act of a piece answer to their preconceived notions of what a first act should be, like *Obstinate* in *John Bunyan*, positively thrust their fingers in their ears, that they may not hear a word of what is coming, though perhaps the very next act may be composed in a style as different as possible, and be written quite to their own tastes. These Adders refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, because the tuning of his instrument gave them offence.

I should weary you and myself too, if I were to go through all the classes of the serpent kind. Two qualities are common to them all. They are creatures of remarkably cold digestions, and chiefly haunt *pits* and low grounds.

I proceed with more pleasure to give you an account of a Club to which I have the honour to belong. There are fourteen of us, who are all authors that have been once in our lives what is called *damned*. We meet on the anniversaries of our respective nights, and make ourselves merry at the expence of the public. The chief tenets which

distinguish our society, and which every man among us is bound to hold for gospel, are,—

That the public, or mob, in all ages, have been a set of blind, deaf, obstinate, senseless, illiterate savages. That no man of genius in his senses would be ambitious of pleasing such a capricious, ungrateful rabble. That the only legitimate end of writing for them is to pick their pockets, and, *that failing*, we are at full liberty to vilify and abuse them as much as ever we think fit.

That authors, by their affected pretences to humility, which they make use of as a cloak to insinuate their writings into the callous senses of the multitude, obtuse to every thing but the grossest flattery, have by degrees made that great beast their master; as we may act submission to children till we are obliged to practise it in earnest. That authors are and ought to be considered the masters and preceptors of the public, and not *vice versa*. That it was so in the days of Orpheus, Linus, and Musæus, and would be so again, if it were not that writers prove traitors to themselves. That in particular, in the days of the first of those three great authors just mentioned, audiences appear to have been perfect models of what audiences should be; for though along with the trees and the rocks and the wild creatures, which he drew after him to listen to his strains, some serpents doubtless came to hear his music, it does not appear that any one among them ever lifted up a *dissentient voice*. They knew what was due to authors in those days. Now every stock and stone turns into a serpent, and has a voice.

That the terms 'Courteous Reader' and 'Candid Auditors', as having given rise to a false notion in those to whom they were applied, as if they conferred upon them some right, *which they cannot have*, of exercising their judgments, ought to be utterly banished and exploded.

These are our distinguishing tenets. To keep up the memory of the cause in which we suffered, as the ancients sacrificed a goat, a supposed unhealthy animal, to Æsculapius, on our feast-nights we cut up a goose, an animal typical of the *popular voice*, to the deities of Candour and Patient Hearing. A zealous member of the society once

proposed that we should revive the obsolete luxury of viper-broth; but the stomachs of some of the company rising at the proposition, we lost the benefit of that highly salutary and *antidotal dish*.

The privilege of admission to our club is strictly limited to such as have been fairly *damned*. A piece that has met with ever so little applause, that has but languished its night or two, and then gone out, will never entitle its author to a seat among us. An exception to our usual readiness in conferring this privilege is, in the case of a writer, who having been once condemned, writes again, and becomes candidate for a second martyrdom. Simple damnation we hold to be a merit, but to be twice-damned we adjudge infamous. Such a one we utterly reject, and black-ball without a hearing :—

The common damn'd shun his society.

Hoping that your publication of our Regulations may be a means of inviting some more members into our society, I conclude this long letter. I am, Sir, yours,

SEMEL-DAMNATUS.

ON BURIAL SOCIETIES; AND THE CHARACTER OF AN UNDERTAKER

[Composed 1811. Printed in *The Reflector*, No. III (April—Sept., 1811), Art. XIII. Reprinted in *Works*, 1818. Text of 1818.]

[1] *To the Editor of the Reflector*

[2] MR. REFLECTOR,—I was amused the other day with having the following notice thrust into my hand by a man who gives out bills at the corner of Fleet-market. Whether he saw any prognostics about me, that made him judge such notice seasonable, I cannot say; I might perhaps carry in a countenance (naturally not very florid) traces of a fever which had not long left me. Those fellows have a good instinctive way of guessing at the sort of people that are likeliest to pay attention to their papers.

[1] *To the Editor of the Reflector. omit* 1811. [2] MR. REFLECTOR] SIR 1811.

'Burial Society

'A favourable opportunity now offers to any person, of either sex, who would wish to be buried in a genteel manner, by paying one shilling entrance, and two-pence per week for the benefit of the stock. Members to be free in six months. The money to be paid at Mr. Middleton's, at the sign of the *First* and the *Last*, Stonecutter's-street, Fleet-market. The deceased to be furnished as follows :—A strong elm coffin, covered with superfine black, and finished with two rows, all round, close drove, [1]best japanned nails, and adorned with ornamental drops, a handsome plate of inscription, Angel above, and Flower beneath, and four pair of handsome handles, with wrought gripes ; the coffin to be well pitched, lined, and ruffled with fine crape ; a handsome crape shroud, cap, and pillow. For use, a handsome velvet pall, three gentlemen's cloaks, three crape hatbands, three hoods and scarfs, and six pairs of gloves ; two porters equipped to attend the funeral, a man to attend the same with band and gloves ; also, the burial fees paid, if not exceeding one guinea.'

'Man', says Sir Thomas Browne, 'is a noble animal, splendid in ashes, and pompous in the grave.' Whoever drew up this little advertisement, certainly understood this appetite in the species, and has made abundant provision for it. It really almost induces a *tædium vitæ* upon one to read it. Methinks I could be willing to die, in death to be so attended. The two rows all round close-drove best black japanned nails,—how feelingly do they invite and almost irresistibly persuade us to come and be fastened down ! what aching head can resist the temptation to repose, which the crape shroud, the cap, and the pillow present ; what sting is there in death, which the handles with wrought gripes are not calculated to pluck away ? what victory in the grave, which the drops and the velvet pall do not render at least extremely disputable ; but above all, the pretty emblematic plate with the Angel above and the Flower beneath, takes me mightily.

The notice goes on to inform us, that though the society has been established but a very few years, upwards of

[1] best japanned] best black japanned 1811.

eleven hundred persons have put down their names. It is really an affecting consideration to think of so many poor people, of the industrious and hard working class (for none but such would be possessed of such a generous forethought) clubbing their twopences to save the reproach of a parish funeral. Many a poor fellow, I dare swear, has that Angel and Flower kept from the *Angel* and *Punchbowl*, while, to provide himself a bier, he has curtailed himself of *beer*. Many a savory morsel has the living body been deprived of, that the lifeless one might be served up in a richer state to the worms. And sure, if the body could understand the actions of the soul, and [1]entertain generous notions of things, it would thank its provident partner, that she had been more solicitous to defend it from dishonours at its dissolution, than careful to pamper it with good things in the time of its union. If Cæsar were chiefly anxious at his death how he might die most decently, every Burial Society may be considered as a Club of Cæsars.

Nothing tends to keep up, in the imaginations of the poorer sort of people, a generous horror of the workhouse more than the manner in which pauper funerals are conducted in this metropolis. The coffin nothing but a few naked planks, coarsely put together,—the want of a pall (that decent and well-imagined veil, which, hiding the coffin that hides the body, keeps that which would shock us at two removes from us), the coloured coats of the men that are hired, at cheap rates, to carry the body,—altogether give the notion of the deceased having been some person of an ill-life and conversation, some one who may not claim the entire rites of Christian burial,—one by whom some parts of the sacred ceremony would be desecrated if they should be bestowed upon him. I meet these meagre processions sometimes in the street. They are sure to make me out of humour and melancholy all the day after. They have a harsh and ominous aspect.

If there is any thing in the prospectus issued from Mr. Middleton's, Stonecutter's-street, which pleases me less than the rest, it is to find, that the six pair of gloves are to be returned, that they are only lent, or, as the bill expresses

[1] entertain] entertained 1811.

it, for use, on the occasion. The hood, scarfs, and hatbands, may properly enough be given up after the solemnity : the cloaks no gentleman would think of keeping ; but a pair of gloves, once fitted on, ought not in courtesy to be redemanded. The wearer should certainly have the fee-simple of them. The cost would be but trifling, and they would be a proper memorial of the day. This part of the Proposal wants reconsidering. It is not conceived in the same liberal way of thinking as the rest. I am also a little doubtful whether the limit, within which the burial-fee is made payable, should not be extended to thirty shillings.

Some provision too ought undoubtedly to be made in favour of those well-intentioned persons and well-wishers to the fund, who, having all along paid their subscriptions regularly, are so unfortunate as to die before the six months, which would entitle them to their freedom, are quite completed. One can hardly imagine a more distressing case than that of a poor fellow lingering on in a consumption till the period of his freedom is almost in sight, and then finding himself going with a velocity which makes it doubtful whether he shall be entitled to his funeral honours : his quota to which he nevertheless squeezes out, to the diminution of the comforts which sickness demands. I think, in such cases, some of the contribution-money ought to revert. With some such modifications, which might easily be introduced, I see nothing in these Proposals of Mr. Middleton which is not strictly fair and genteel ; and heartily recommend them to all persons of moderate incomes, in either sex, who are willing that this perishable part of them should quit the scene of its mortal activities, with as handsome circumstances as possible.

Before I quit the subject, I must guard my readers against a scandal, which they may be apt to take at the place whence these Proposals purport to be issued. From the sign of the *First* and the *Last*, they may conclude that Mr. Middleton is some publican, who, in assembling a club of this description at his house, may have a sinister end of his own, altogether foreign to the solemn purpose for which the club is pretended to be instituted. I must set them right by informing them that the issuer of these Proposals is no publican, though he hangs out a sign, but an honest superin-

tendant of funerals, who, by the device of a Cradle and a Coffin, connecting both ends of human existence together, has most ingeniously contrived to insinuate, that the framers of these *first* and *last* receptacles of mankind divide this our life betwixt them, and that all that passes from the midwife to the undertaker may, in strict propriety, *go for nothing:* an awful and instructive lesson to human vanity.

Looking over some papers lately that fell into my hands by chance, and appear to have been written about the beginning of the last century, I stumbled, among the rest, upon the following short essay, which the writer calls '*The Character of an Undertaker*'. It is written with some stiffness and peculiarities of style, but some parts of it, I think, not unaptly characterise the profession to which Mr. Middleton has the honour to belong. The writer doubtless had in his mind the entertaining character of *Sable*, in Steele's excellent comedy of the *Funeral*.

Character of an Undertaker

'He is master of the ceremonies at burials and mourning assemblies, grand marshal at funeral processions, the only true yeoman of the body, over which he exercises a dictatorial authority from the moment that the breath has taken leave to that of its final commitment to the earth. His ministry begins where the physician's, the lawyer's, and the divine's, end. Or if some part of the functions of the latter run parallel with his, it is only *in ordine ad spiritualia*. His temporalities remain unquestioned. He is arbitrator of all questions of honour which may concern the defunct; and upon slight inspection will pronounce how long he may remain in this upper world with credit to himself, and when it will be prudent for his reputation that he should retire. His determination in these points is peremptory and without appeal. Yet, with a modesty peculiar to his profession, he meddles not out of his own sphere. With the good or bad actions of the deceased in his life-time he has nothing to do. He leaves the friends of the dead man to form their own conjectures as to the place to which the departed spirit is gone. His care is only about the exuviæ. He concerns not himself even about the body, as it is a structure of

parts internal, and a wonderful microcosm. He leaves such curious speculations to the anatomy professor. Or, if any thing, he is averse to such wanton enquiries, as delighting rather that the parts which he has care of should be returned to their kindred dust in as handsome and unmutilated condition as possible ; that the grave should have its full and unimpaired tribute,—a complete and just carcass. Nor is he only careful to provide for the body's entireness, but for its accommodation and ornament. He orders the fashion of its clothes, and designs the symmetry of its dwelling. Its vanity has an innocent survival in him. He is bedmaker to the dead. The pillows which he lays never rumple. The day of interment is the theatre in which he displays the mysteries of his art. It is hard to describe what he is, or rather to tell what he is not, on that day : for, being neither kinsman, servant, nor friend, he is all in turns ; a transcendant, running through all those relations. His office is to supply the place of self-agency in the family, who are presumed incapable of it through grief. He is eyes, and ears, and hands, to the whole household. A draught of wine cannot go round to the mourners, but he must minister it. A chair may hardly be restored to its place by a less solemn hand than his. He takes upon himself all functions, and is a sort of ephemeral major-domo ! He distributes his attentions among the company assembled according to the degree of affliction, which he calculates from the degree of kin to the deceased ; and marshals them accordingly in the procession. He himself is of a sad and tristful countenance ; yet such as (if well examined) is not without some show of patience and resignation at bottom : prefiguring, as it were, to the friends of the deceased, what their grief shall be when the hand of Time shall have softened and taken down the bitterness of their first anguish ; so handsomely can he fore-shape and anticipate the work of Time. Lastly, with his wand, as with another divining rod, he calculates the depth of earth at which the bones of the dead man may rest, which he ordinarily contrives may be at such a distance from the surface of this earth, as may frustrate the profane attempts of such as would violate his repose, yet sufficiently on this side the centre to give his friends hopes of an easy and

practicable resurrection. And here we leave him, casting in dust to dust, which is the last friendly office that he *undertakes* to do.'

Begging your pardon for detaining you so long among 'graves, and worms, and epitaphs',

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant,
MORITURUS

ON THE TRAGEDIES OF SHAKSPEARE, CONSIDERED WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR FITNESS FOR STAGE REPRESENTATION

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TAKING a turn the other day in the Abbey, I was struck with the affected attitude of a figure, which I do not remember to have seen before, and which upon examination proved to be a whole-length of the celebrated Mr. Garrick. Though I would not go so far with some good catholics abroad as to shut players altogether out of consecrated ground, yet I own I was not a little scandalized at the introduction of theatrical airs and gestures into a place set apart to remind us of the saddest realities. Going nearer, I found inscribed under this harlequin figure the following lines :—

> To paint fair Nature, by divine command,
> Her magic pencil in his glowing hand,
> A Shakspeare rose: then, to expand his fame
> Wide o'er this breathing world, a Garrick came.
> Though sunk in death the forms the Poet drew,
> The Actor's genius bade them breathe anew;
> Though, like the bard himself, in night they lay,
> Immortal Garrick call'd them back to day:
> And till Eternity with power sublime
> Shall mark the mortal hour of hoary Time,
> Shakspeare and Garrick like twin-stars shall shine,
> And earth irradiate with a beam divine.

It would be an insult to my readers' understandings to

attempt any thing like a criticism on this farrago of false thoughts and nonsense. But the reflection it led me into was a kind of wonder, how, from the days of the actor here celebrated to our own, it should have been the fashion to compliment every performer in his turn, that has had the luck to please the town in any of the great characters of Shakspeare, with the notion of possessing a *mind congenial with the poet's*: how people should come thus unaccountably to confound the power of originating poetical images and conceptions with the faculty of being able to read or recite the same when put into words;[a] or what connection that absolute mastery over the heart and soul of man, which a great dramatic poet possesses, has with those low tricks upon the eye and ear, which a player by observing a few general effects, which some common passion, as grief, anger, &c. usually has upon the gestures and exterior, can so easily compass. To know the internal workings and movements of a great mind, of an Othello or a Hamlet for instance, the *when* and the *why* and the *how far* they should be moved; to what pitch a passion is becoming; to give the reins and to pull in the curb exactly at the moment when the drawing in or the slackening is most graceful; seems to demand a reach of intellect of a vastly different extent from that which is employed upon the bare imitation of the signs of these passions in the countenance or gesture, which signs are usually observed to be most lively and emphatic in the weaker sort of minds, and which signs can after all but indicate some passion, as I said before, anger, or grief, generally; but of the motives and grounds of the passion, wherein it differs from the same passion in low and vulgar natures, of these the actor can give no more idea by his face or gesture than the eye (without a metaphor) can speak, or the muscles utter intelligible sounds. But such is the instantaneous nature of the impressions which

[a] It is observable that we fall into this confusion only in *dramatic* recitations. We never dream that the gentleman who reads Lucretius in public with great applause, is therefore a great poet and philosopher; nor do we find that Tom Davies, the bookseller, who is recorded to have recited the Paradise Lost better than any man in England in his day (though I cannot help thinking there must be some mistake in this tradition), was therefore, by his intimate friends, set upon a level with Milton.

we take in at the eye and ear at a playhouse, compared with the slow apprehension oftentimes of the understanding in reading, that we are apt not only to sink the play-writer in the consideration which we pay to the actor, but even to identify in our minds in a perverse manner, the actor with the character which he represents. It is difficult for a frequent playgoer to disembarrass the idea of Hamlet from the person and voice of Mr. K. We speak of Lady Macbeth, while we are in reality thinking of Mrs. S. Nor is this confusion incidental alone to unlettered persons, who, not possessing the advantage of reading, are necessarily dependent upon the stage-player for all the pleasure which they can receive from the drama, and to whom the very idea of *what an author is* cannot be made comprehensible without some pain and perplexity of mind: the error is one from which persons otherwise not meanly lettered, find it almost impossible to extricate themselves.

Never let me be so ungrateful as to forget the very high degree of satisfaction which I received some years back from seeing for the first time a tragedy of Shakspeare performed, in which these two great performers sustained the principal parts. It seemed to embody and realize conceptions which had hitherto assumed no distinct shape. But dearly do we pay all our life after for this juvenile pleasure, this sense of distinctness. When the novelty is past, we find to our cost that instead of realizing an idea, we have only materialized and brought down a fine vision to the standard of flesh and blood. We have let go a dream, in quest of an unattainable substance.

How cruelly this operates upon the mind, to have its free conceptions thus crampt and pressed down to the measure of a strait-lacing actuality, may be judged from that delightful sensation of freshness, with which we turn to those plays of Shakspeare which have escaped being performed, and to those passages in the acting plays of the same writer which have happily been left out in performance. How far the very custom of hearing any thing *spouted*, withers and blows upon a fine passage, may be seen in those speeches from Henry the Fifth, &c. which are current in the mouths of school-boys from their being to be found in *Enfield Speakers*, and such kind of books. I confess myself

utterly unable to appreciate that celebrated soliloquy in Hamlet, beginning 'To be or not to be', or to tell whether it be good, bad, or indifferent, it has been so handled and pawed about by declamatory boys and men, and torn so inhumanly from its living place and principle of continuity in the play, till it is become to me a perfect dead member.

It may seem a paradox, but I cannot help being of opinion that the plays of Shakspeare are less calculated for performance on a stage, than those of almost any other dramatist whatever. Their distinguished excellence is a reason that they should be so. There is so much in them, which comes not under the province of acting, with which eye, and tone, and gesture, have nothing to do.

The glory of the scenic art is to personate passion, and the turns of passion; and the more coarse and palpable the passion is, the more hold upon the eyes and ears of the spectators the performer obviously possesses. For this reason, scolding scenes, scenes where two persons talk themselves into a fit of fury, and then in a surprising manner talk themselves out of it again, have always been the most popular upon our stage. And the reason is plain, because the spectators are here most palpably appealed to, they are the proper judges in this war of words, they are the legitimate ring that should be formed round such 'intellectual prize-fighters'. Talking is the direct object of the imitation here. But in all the best dramas, and in Shakspeare above all, how obvious it is, that the form of *speaking*, whether it be in soliloquy or dialogue, is only a medium, and often a highly artificial one, for putting the reader or spectator into possession of that knowledge of the inner structure and workings of mind in a character, which he could otherwise never have arrived at *in that form of composition* by any gift short of intuition. We do here as we do with novels written in the *epistolary form*. How many improprieties, perfect solecisms in letter-writing, do we put up with in Clarissa and other books, for the sake of the delight which that form upon the whole gives us.

But the practice of stage representation reduces every thing to a controversy of elocution. Every character, from the boisterous blasphemings of Bajazet to the shrinking timidity of womanhood, must play the orator. The love-

dialogues of Romeo and Juliet, those silver-sweet sounds of lovers' tongues by night; the more intimate and sacred sweetness [1]of nuptial colloquy between an Othello or a Posthumus with their married wives, all those delicacies which are so delightful in the reading, as when we read of those youthful dalliances in Paradise—

> As beseem'd
> Fair couple link'd in happy nuptial league
> Alone:

by the inherent fault of stage representation, how are these things sullied and turned from their very nature by being exposed to a large assembly; when such speeches as Imogen addresses to her lord, come drawling out of the mouth of a hired actress, whose courtship, though nominally addressed to the personated Posthumus, is manifestly aimed at the spectators, who are to judge of her endearments and her returns of love.

The character of Hamlet is perhaps that by which, since the days of Betterton, a succession of popular performers have had the greatest ambition to distinguish themselves. The length of the part may be one of their reasons. But for the character itself, we find it in a play, and therefore we judge it a fit subject of dramatic representation. The play itself abounds in maxims and reflexions beyond any other, and therefore we consider it as a proper vehicle for conveying moral instruction. But Hamlet himself—what does he suffer meanwhile by being dragged forth as a public schoolmaster, to give lectures to the crowd! Why, nine parts in ten of what Hamlet does, are transactions between himself and his moral sense, they are the effusions of his solitary musings, which he retires to holes and corners and the most sequestered parts of the palace to pour forth; or rather, they are the silent meditations with which his bosom is bursting, reduced to *words* for the sake of the reader, who must else remain ignorant of what is passing there. These profound sorrows, these light-and-noise-abhorring ruminations, which the tongue scarce dares utter to deaf walls and chambers, how can they be represented by a gesticulating actor, who comes and mouths them out before an audience, making four hundred people his confidants at once? I say

[1] sweetness] sweetnesses 1811.

not that it is the fault of the actor so to do; he must pronounce them *ore rotundo*, he must accompany them with his eye, he must insinuate them into his auditory by some trick of eye, tone, or gesture, or he fails. *He must be thinking all the while of his appearance, because he knows that all the while the spectators are judging of it.* And this is the way to represent the shy, negligent, retiring Hamlet.

It is true that there is no other mode of conveying a vast quantity of thought and feeling to a great portion of the audience, who otherwise would never earn it for themselves by reading, and the intellectual acquisition gained this way may, for aught I know, be inestimable; but I am not arguing that Hamlet should not be acted, but how much Hamlet is made another thing by being acted. I have heard much of the wonders which Garrick performed in this part; but as I never saw him, I must have leave to doubt whether the representation of such a character came within the province of his art. Those who tell me of him, speak of his eye, of the magic of his eye, and of his commanding voice: physical properties, vastly desirable in an actor, and without which he can never insinuate meaning into an auditory,—but what have they to do with Hamlet? what have they to do with intellect? In fact, the things aimed at in theatrical representation, are to arrest the spectator's eye upon the form and the gesture, and so to gain a more favourable hearing to what is spoken: it is not what the character is, but how he looks; not what he says, but how he speaks it. I see no reason to think that if the play of Hamlet were written over again by some such writer as Banks or Lillo, retaining the process of the story, but totally omitting all the poetry of it, all the divine features of Shakspeare, his stupendous intellect; and only taking care to give us enough of passionate dialogue, which Banks or Lillo were never at a loss to furnish; I see not how the effect could be much different upon an audience, nor how the actor has it in his power to represent Shakspeare to us differently from his representation of Banks or Lillo. Hamlet would still be a youthful accomplished prince, and must be gracefully personated; he might be puzzled in his mind, wavering in his conduct, seemingly-cruel to Ophelia, he might see a ghost, and start at it, and address it kindly when he found

it to be his father ; all this in the poorest and most homely language of the servilest creeper after nature that ever consulted the palate of an audience ; without troubling Shakspeare for the matter : and I see not but there would be room for all the power which an actor has, to display itself. All the passions and changes of passion might remain : for those are much less difficult to write or act than is thought, it is a trick easy to be attained, it is but rising or falling a note or two in the voice, a whisper with a significant foreboding look to announce its approach, and so contagious the counterfeit appearance of any emotion is, that let the words be what they will, the look and tone shall carry it off and make it pass for deep skill in the passions.

It is common for people to talk of Shakspeare's plays being *so natural ;* that every body can understand him. They are natural indeed, they are grounded deep in nature, so deep that the depth of them lies out of the reach of most of us. You shall hear the same persons say that George Barnwell is very natural, and Othello is very natural, that they are both very deep ; and to them they are the same kind of thing. At the one they sit and shed tears, because a good sort of young man is tempted by a naughty woman to commit *a trifling peccadillo,* the murder of an uncle or so,[a] that is all, and so comes to an untimely end, which is *so moving ;* and at the other, because a blackamoor in a fit of jealousy kills his innocent white wife : and the odds are that ninety-nine out of a hundred would willingly behold the same catastrophe happen to both the heroes,

[a] If this note could hope to meet the eye of any of the Managers, I would intreat and beg of them, in the name of both the Galleries, that this insult upon the morality of the common people of London should cease to be eternally repeated in the holiday weeks. Why are the 'Prentices of this famous and well-governed city, instead of an amusement, to be treated over and over again with the nauseous sermon of George Barnwell ? Why *at the end of their vistoes* are we to place the *gallows ?* Were I an uncle, I should not much like a nephew of mine to have such an example placed before his eyes. It is really making uncle-murder too trivial to exhibit it as done upon such slight motives ; —it is attributing too much to such characters as Millwood ;—it is putting things into the heads of good young men, which they would never otherwise have dreamed of. Uncles that think any thing of their lives, should fairly petition the Chamberlain against it.

and have thought the rope more due to Othello than to Barnwell.) For of the texture of Othello's mind, the inward construction marvellously laid open with all its strengths and weaknesses, its heroic confidences and its human misgivings, its agonies of hate springing from the depths of love, they see no more than the spectators at a cheaper rate, who pay their pennies a-piece to look through the man's telescope in Leicester-fields, see into the inward plot and topography of the moon. Some dim thing or other they see, they see an actor personating a passion, of grief, or anger, for instance, and they recognize it as a copy of the usual external effects of such passions; for at least as being true to *that symbol of the emotion which passes current at the theatre for it*, for it is often no more than that: but of the grounds of the passion, its correspondence to a great or heroic nature, which is the only worthy object of tragedy,—that common auditors know any thing of this, or can have any such notions dinned into them by the mere strength of an actor's lungs,—that apprehensions foreign to them should be thus infused into them by storm, I can neither believe, nor understand how it can be possible.

We talk of Shakspeare's admirable observation of life, when we should feel, that not from a petty inquisition into those cheap and every-day characters which surrounded him, as they surround us, but from his own mind, which was, to borrow a phrase of Ben Jonson's, the very 'sphere of humanity', he fetched those images of virtue and of knowledge, of which every one of us recognizing a part, think we comprehend in our natures the whole; and oftentimes mistake the powers which he positively creates in us, for nothing more than indigenous faculties of our own minds which only waited the application of corresponding virtues in him to return a full and clear echo of the same.

To return to Hamlet.—Among the distinguishing features of that wonderful character, one of the most interesting (yet painful) is that soreness of mind which makes him treat the intrusions of Polonius with harshness, and that asperity which he puts on in his interviews with Ophelia. These tokens of an unhinged mind (if they be not mixed in the latter case with a profound artifice of love, to alienate Ophelia by affected discourtesies, so to prepare

her mind for the breaking off of that loving intercourse, which can no longer find a place amidst business so serious as that which he has to do) are parts of his character, which to reconcile with our admiration of Hamlet, the most patient consideration of his situation is no more than necessary; they are what we *forgive afterwards*, and explain by the whole of his character, but *at the time* they are harsh and unpleasant. Yet such is the actor's necessity of giving strong blows to the audience, that I have never seen a player in this character, who did not exaggerate and strain to the utmost these ambiguous features,—these temporary deformities in the character. They make him express a vulgar scorn at Polonius which utterly degrades his gentility, and which no explanation can render palateable; they make him shew contempt, and curl up the nose at Ophelia's father,—contempt in its very grossest and most hateful form; but they get applause by it: it is natural, people say; that is, the words are scornful, and the actor expresses scorn, and that they can judge of: but why so much scorn, and of that sort, they never think of asking.

So to Ophelia.—All the Hamlets that I have ever seen, rant and rave at her as if she had committed some great crime, and the audience are highly pleased, because the words of the part are satirical, and they are enforced by the strongest expression of satirical indignation of which the face and voice are capable. But then, whether Hamlet is likely to have put on such brutal appearances to a lady whom he loved so dearly, is never thought on. The truth is, that in all such deep affections as had subsisted between Hamlet and Ophelia, there is a stock of *supererogatory love*, (if I may venture to use the expression) which in any great grief of heart, especially where that which preys upon the mind cannot be communicated, confers a kind of indulgence upon the grieved party to express itself, even to its heart's dearest object, in the language of a temporary alienation; but it is not alienation, it is a distraction purely, and so it always makes itself to be felt by that object: it is not anger, but grief assuming the appearance of anger,—love awkwardly counterfeiting hate, as sweet countenances when they try to frown: but such sternness and fierce disgust as Hamlet is made to shew, is

no counterfeit, but the real face of absolute aversion,—of irreconcileable alienation. It may be said he puts on the madman; but then he should only so far put on this counterfeit lunacy as his own real distraction will give him leave; that is, incompletely, imperfectly; not in that confirmed practised way, like a master of his art, or, as Dame Quickly would say, 'like one of those harlotry players.'

I mean no disrespect to any actor, but the sort of pleasure which Shakspeare's plays give in the acting seems to me not at all to differ from that which the audience receive from those of other writers; and, *they being in themselves essentially so different from all others*, I must conclude that there is something in the nature of acting which levels all distinctions. And in fact, who does not speak indifferently of the Gamester and of Macbeth as fine stage performances, and praise the Mrs. Beverley in the same way as the Lady Macbeth of Mrs. S.? Belvidera, and Calista, and Isabella, and Euphrasia, are they less liked than Imogen, or than Juliet, or than Desdemona? Are they not spoken of and remembered in the same way? Is not the female performer as great (as they call it) in one as in the other? Did not Garrick shine, and was not he ambitious of shining in every drawling tragedy that his wretched day produced,—the productions of the Hills and the Murphys and the Browns,—and shall he have that honour to dwell in our minds for ever as an inseparable concomitant with Shakspeare? A kindred mind! O who can read that affecting sonnet of Shakspeare which alludes to his profession as a player:—

> Oh for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
> The guilty goddess of my [1]harmful deeds,
> That did not better for my life provide
> Than public means which public custom breeds—
> Thence comes it that my name receives a brand;
> And almost thence my nature is subdued
> To what it works in, like the dyer's hand—

Or that other confession:—

> Alas! 'tis true, I have gone here and there,
> And made myself a motly to thy view,
> Gor'd mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear—

[1] harmful] harmless 1811.

Who can read these instances of jealous self-watchfulness in our sweet Shakspeare, and dream of any congeniality between him and one that, by every tradition of him, appears to have been as mere a player as ever existed; to have had his mind tainted with the lowest players' vices,—envy and jealousy, and miserable cravings after applause; one who in the exercise of his profession was jealous even of the women-performers that stood in his way; a manager full of managerial tricks and stratagems and finesse: that any resemblance should be dreamed of between him and Shakspeare,—Shakspeare who, in the plenitude and consciousness of his own powers, could with that noble modesty, which we can neither imitate nor appreciate, express himself thus of his own sense of his own defects:—

> Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
> Featur'd like him, like him with friends possest;
> Desiring *this man's art, and that man's scope.*

I am almost disposed to deny to Garrick the merit of being an admirer of Shakspeare. A true lover of his excellencies he certainly was not; for would any true lover of them have admitted into his matchless scenes such ribald trash as Tate and Cibber, and the rest of them, that

> With their darkness durst affront his light,

have foisted into the acting plays of Shakspeare? I believe it impossible that he could have had a proper reverence for Shakspeare, and have condescended to go through that interpolated scene in Richard the Third, in which Richard tries to break his wife's heart by telling her he loves another woman, and says, 'if she survives this she is immortal.' Yet I doubt not he delivered this vulgar stuff with as much anxiety of emphasis as any of the genuine parts; and for acting, it is as well calculated as any. But we have seen the part of Richard lately produce great fame to an actor by his manner of playing it, and it lets us into the secret of acting, and of popular judgments of Shakspeare derived from acting. Not one of the spectators who have witnessed Mr. C.'s exertions in that part, but has come away with a proper conviction that Richard is a very wicked man, and kills little children in their beds, with something like the pleasure which the giants and ogres in children's books

are represented to have taken in that practice ; moreover, that he is very close and shrewd and devilish cunning, for you could see that by his eye.

But is in fact this the impression we have in reading the Richard of Shakspeare ? Do we feel any thing like disgust, as we do at that butcher-like representation of him that passes for him on the stage ? A horror at his crimes blends with the effect which we feel, but how is it qualified, how is it carried off, by the rich intellect which he displays, his resources, his wit, his buoyant spirits, his vast knowledge and insight into characters, the poetry of his part,—not an atom of all which is made perceivable in Mr. C.'s way of acting it. Nothing but his crimes, his actions, is visible ; they are prominent and staring ; the murderer stands out, but where is the lofty genius, the man of vast capacity,—the profound, the witty, accomplished Richard ?

The truth is, the Characters of Shakspeare are so much the objects of meditation rather than of interest or curiosity as to their actions, that while we are reading any of his great criminal characters,—Macbeth, Richard, even Iago,—we think not so much of the crimes which they commit, as of the ambition, the aspiring spirit, the intellectual activity, which prompts them to overleap those moral fences. Barnwell is a wretched murderer ; there is a certain fitness between his neck and the rope ; he is the legitimate heir to the gallows ; nobody who thinks at all can think of any alleviating circumstances in his case to make him a fit object of mercy. Or to take an instance from the higher tragedy, what else but a mere assassin is Glenalvon ! Do we think of any thing but of the crime which he commits, and the rack which he deserves ? That is all which we really think about him. Whereas in corresponding characters in Shakspeare so little do the actions comparatively affect us, that while the impulses, the inner mind in all its perverted greatness, solely seems real and is exclusively attended to, the crime is comparatively nothing. But when we see these things represented, the acts which they do are comparatively every thing, their impulses nothing. The state of sublime emotion into which we are elevated by those images of night and horror which Macbeth is made to utter, that solemn prelude with which he entertains the time till the

bell shall strike which is to call him to murder Duncan,—when we no longer read it in a book, when we have given up that vantage-ground of abstraction which reading possesses over seeing, and come to see a man in his bodily shape before our eyes actually preparing to commit a murder, if the acting be true and impressive, as I have witnessed it in Mr. K.'s performance of that part, the painful anxiety about the act, the natural longing to prevent it while it yet seems unperpetrated, the too close pressing semblance of reality, give a pain and an uneasiness which totally destroy all the delight which the words in the book convey, where the deed doing never presses upon us with the painful sense of presence: it rather seems to belong to history,—to something past and inevitable, if it has any thing to do with time at all. The sublime images, the poetry alone, is that which is present to our minds in the reading.

So to see Lear acted,—to see an old man tottering about the stage with a walking-stick, turned out of doors by his daughters in a rainy night, has nothing in it but what is painful and disgusting. We want to take him into shelter and relieve him. That is all the feeling which the acting of Lear ever produced in me. But the Lear of Shakspeare cannot be acted. The contemptible machinery by which they mimic the storm which he goes out in, is not more inadequate to represent the horrors of the real elements, than any actor can be to represent Lear: they might more easily propose to personate the Satan of Milton upon a stage, or one of Michael Angelo's terrible figures. The greatness of Lear is not in corporal dimension, but in intellectual: the explosions of his passion are terrible as a volcano: they are storms turning up and disclosing to the bottom that sea, his mind, with all its vast riches. It is his mind which is laid bare. This case of flesh and blood seems too insignificant to be thought on; even as he himself neglects it. On the stage we see nothing but corporal infirmities and weakness, the impotence of rage; while we read it, we see not Lear, but we are Lear,—we are in his mind, we are sustained by a grandeur which baffles the malice of daughters and storms; in the aberrations of his reason, we discover a mighty irregular power of reasoning, immethodized from the ordinary purposes of life, but exerting its powers, as the

wind blows where it listeth, at will upon the corruptions and abuses of mankind. What have looks, or tones, to do with that sublime identification of his age with that of the *heavens themselves*, when in his reproaches to them for conniving at the injustice of his children, he reminds them that 'they themselves are old'. What gesture shall we appropriate to this? What has the voice or the eye to do with such things? But the play is beyond all art, as the tamperings with it shew: it is too hard and stony; it must have love-scenes, and a happy ending. It is not enough that Cordelia is a daughter, she must shine as a lover too. Tate has put his hook in the nostrils of this Leviathan, for Garrick and his followers, the showmen of the scene, to draw the mighty beast about more easily. A happy ending! —as if the living martyrdom that Lear had gone through,— the flaying of his feelings alive, did not make a fair dismissal from the stage of life the only decorous thing for him. If he is to live and be happy after, if he could sustain this world's burden after, why all this pudder and preparation,— why torment us with all this unnecessary sympathy? As if the childish pleasure of getting his gilt robes and sceptre again could tempt him to act over again his misused station, —as if at his years, and with his experience, any thing was left but to die.

Lear is essentially impossible to be represented on a stage. But how many dramatic personages are there in Shakspeare, which though more tractable and feasible (if I may so speak) than Lear, yet from some circumstance, some adjunct to their character, are improper to be shewn to our bodily eye. Othello for instance. Nothing can be more soothing, more flattering to the nobler parts of our natures, than to read of a young Venetian lady of highest extraction, through the force of love and from a sense of merit in him whom she loved, laying aside every consideration of kindred, and country, and colour, and wedding with *a coal-black Moor*—(for such he is represented, in the imperfect state of knowledge respecting foreign countries in those days, compared with our own, or in compliance with popular notions, though the Moors are now well enough known to be by many shades less unworthy of a white woman's fancy)—it is the perfect triumph of virtue over

accidents, of the imagination over the senses. She sees Othello's colour in his mind. But upon the stage, when the imagination is no longer the ruling faculty, but we are left to our poor unassisted senses, I appeal to every one that has seen Othello played, whether he did not, on the contrary, sink Othello's mind in his colour; whether he did not find something extremely revolting in the courtship and wedded caresses of Othello and Desdemona; and whether the actual sight of the thing did not over-weigh all that beautiful compromise which we make in reading;—and the reason it should do so is obvious, because there is just so much reality presented to our senses as to give a perception of disagreement, with not enough of belief in the internal motives,—all that which is unseen,—to overpower and reconcile the first and obvious prejudices.[a] What we see upon a stage is body and bodily action; what we are conscious of in reading is almost exclusively the mind, and its movements: and this I think may sufficiently account for the very different sort of delight with which the same play so often affects us in the reading and the seeing.

It requires little reflection to perceive, that if those characters in Shakspeare which are within the precincts of nature, have yet something in them which appeals too exclusively to the imagination, to admit of their being made objects to the senses without suffering a change and a diminution,—that still stronger the objection must lie against representing another line of characters, which Shakspeare has introduced to give a wildness and a supernatural elevation to his scenes, as if to remove them still farther from that assimilation to common life in which their excellence is vulgarly supposed to consist. When we read the incantations of those terrible beings the Witches in

[a] The error of supposing that because Othello's colour does not offend us in the reading, it should also not offend us in the seeing, is just such a fallacy as supposing that an Adam and Eve in a picture shall affect us just as they do in the poem. But in the poem we for a while have Paradisaical senses given us, which vanish when we see a man and his wife without clothes in the picture. The painters themselves feel this, as is apparent by the aukward shifts they have recourse to, to make them look not quite naked; by a sort of prophetic anachronism, antedating the invention of fig-leaves. So in the reading of the play, we see with Desdemona's eyes; in the seeing of it, we are forced to look with our own.

Macbeth, though some of the ingredients of their hellish composition savour of the grotesque, yet is the effect upon us other than the most serious and appalling that can be imagined? Do we not feel spell-bound as Macbeth was? Can any mirth accompany a sense of their presence? We might as well laugh under a consciousness of the principle of Evil himself being truly and really present with us. But attempt to bring these beings on to a stage, and you turn them instantly into so many old women, that men and children are to laugh at. Contrary to the old saying, that 'seeing is believing', the sight actually destroys the faith; and the mirth in which we indulge at their expense, when we see these creatures upon a stage, seems to be a sort of indemnification which we make to ourselves for the terror which they put us in when reading made them an object of belief,—when we surrendered up our reason to the poet, as children to their nurses and their elders; and we laugh at [1]our fears, as children who thought they saw something in the dark, triumph when the bringing in of a candle discovers the vanity of their fears. For this exposure of supernatural agents upon a stage is truly bringing in a candle to expose their own delusiveness. It is the solitary taper and the book that generates a faith in these terrors: a ghost by chandelier light, and in good company, deceives no spectators,—a ghost that can be measured by the eye, and his human dimensions made out at leisure. The sight of a well-lighted house, and a well-dressed audience, shall arm the most nervous child against any apprehensions: as Tom Brown says of the impenetrable skin of Achilles with his impenetrable armour over it, 'Bully Dawson would have fought the devil with such advantages.'

Much has been said, and deservedly, in reprobation of the vile mixture which Dryden has thrown into the Tempest: doubtless without some such vicious alloy, the impure ears of that age would never have sate out to hear so much innocence of love as is contained in the sweet courtship of Ferdinand and Miranda. But is the Tempest of Shakspeare at all a subject for stage representation? It is one thing to read of an enchanter, and to believe the wondrous tale while we are reading it; but to have a conjuror brought before

[1] our fears] our late fears 1811.

us in his conjuring-gown, with his spirits about him, which none but himself and some hundred of favoured spectators before the curtain are supposed to see, involves such a quantity of the *hateful incredible*, that all our reverence for the author cannot hinder us from perceiving such gross attempts upon the senses to be in the highest degree childish and inefficient. Spirits and fairies cannot be represented, they cannot even be painted,—they can only be believed. But the elaborate and anxious provision of scenery, which the luxury of the age demands, in these cases works a quite contrary effect to what is intended. That which in comedy, or plays of familiar life, adds so much to the life of the imitation, in plays which appeal to the higher faculties, positively destroys the illusion which it is introduced to aid. A parlour or a drawing-room,—a library opening into a garden,—a garden with an alcove in it,—a street, or the piazza of Covent-garden, does well enough in a scene; we are content to give as much credit to it as it demands; or rather, we think little about it,—it is little more than reading at the top of a page, 'Scene, a Garden;' we do not imagine ourselves there, but we readily admit the imitation of familiar objects. But to think by the help of painted trees and caverns, which we know to be painted, to transport our minds to Prospero, and his island and his lonely cell;[a] or by the aid of a fiddle dexterously thrown in, in an interval of speaking, to make us believe that we hear those supernatural noises of which the isle was full:—the Orrery Lecturer at the Haymarket might as well hope, by his musical glasses cleverly stationed out of sight behind his apparatus, to make us believe that we do indeed hear the chrystal spheres ring out that chime, which if it were to inwrap our fancy long, Milton thinks,

> Time would run back and fetch the age of gold,
> And speckled vanity
> Would sicken soon and die,
> And leprous Sin would melt from earthly mould;
> Yea Hell itself would pass away,
> And leave its dolorous mansions to the peering day.

[a] It will be said these things are done in pictures. But pictures and scenes are very different things. Painting is a world of itself, but in scene-painting there is the attempt to deceive; and there is the discordancy, never to be got over, between painted scenes and real people.

The Garden of Eden, with our first parents in it, is not more impossible to be shewn on a stage, than the Enchanted Isle, with its no less interesting and innocent first settlers.

The subject of Scenery is closely connected with that of the Dresses, which are so anxiously attended to on our stage. I remember the last time I saw Macbeth played, the discrepancy I felt at the changes of garment which he varied,—the shiftings and re-shiftings, like a Romish priest at mass. The luxury of stage-improvements, and the importunity of the public eye, require this. The coronation robe of the Scottish monarch was fairly a counterpart to that which our King wears when he goes to the Parliament-house,—just so full and cumbersome, and set out with ermine and pearls. And if things must be represented, I see not what to find fault with in this. But in reading, what robe are we conscious of? Some dim images of royalty—a crown and sceptre, may float before our eyes, but who shall describe the fashion of it? Do we see in our mind's eye what Webb or any other robe-maker could pattern? This is the inevitable consequence of imitating every thing, to make all things natural. Whereas the reading of a tragedy is a fine abstraction. It presents to the fancy just so much of external appearances as to make us feel that we are among flesh and blood, while by far the greater and better part of our imagination is employed upon the thoughts and internal machinery of the character. But in acting, scenery, dress, the most contemptible things, call upon us to judge of their naturalness.

Perhaps it would be no bad similitude, to liken the pleasure which we take in seeing one of these fine plays acted, compared with that quiet delight which we find in the reading of it, to the different feelings with which a reviewer, and a man that is not a reviewer, reads a fine poem. The accursed critical habit,—the being called upon to judge and pronounce, must make it quite a different thing to the former. In seeing these plays acted, we are affected just as judges. When Hamlet compares the two pictures of Gertrude's first and second husband, who wants to see the pictures? But in the acting, a miniature must be lugged out; which we know not to be the picture, but only to shew how finely a miniature may be represented. This

shewing of every thing, levels all things : it makes tricks, bows, and curtesies, of importance. Mrs. S. never got more fame by any thing than by the manner in which she dismisses the guests in the banquet-scene in Macbeth : it is as much remembered as any of her thrilling tones or impressive looks. But does such a trifle as this enter into the imaginations of the readers of that wild and wonderful scene? Does not the mind dismiss the feasters as rapidly as it can? Does it care about the gracefulness of the doing it? But by acting, and judging of acting, all these non-essentials are raised into an importance, injurious to the main interest of the play.

[1]I have confined my observations to the tragic parts of Shakspeare. It would be no very difficult task to extend the enquiry to his comedies ; and to shew why Falstaff, Shallow, Sir Hugh Evans, and the rest, are equally incompatible with stage representation. The length to which this Essay [2]has run, will make it, I am afraid, sufficiently distasteful to the Amateurs of the Theatre, without going any deeper into the subject at present.

SPECIMENS FROM THE WRITINGS OF FULLER, THE CHURCH HISTORIAN

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THE writings of Fuller are usually designated by the title of quaint, and with sufficient reason ; for such was his natural bias to conceits, that I doubt not upon most occasions it would have been going out of his way to have expressed himself out of them. But his wit is not always a *lumen siccum*, a dry faculty of surprising ; on the contrary, his conceits are oftentimes deeply steeped in human feeling and passion. Above all, his way of telling a story, for its eager liveliness, and the perpetual running commentary

[1] I have hitherto confined my observations to the tragic parts of Shakspeare ; in some future Numbers I propose to extend this inquiry to his Comedies ; and to show why Falstaff, Shallow . . . 1811.

[2] has run] has already run 1811.

of the narrator happily blended with the narration, is perhaps unequalled.

As his works are now scarcely perused but by antiquaries I thought it might not be unacceptable to [1]my readers to present them with some specimens of his manner, in single thoughts and phrases ; and in some few passages of greater length, chiefly of a narrative description. I shall arrange them as I casually find them in my book of extracts, without being solicitous to specify the particular work from which they are taken.

Pyramids.—' The Pyramids themselves, doting with age, have forgotten the names of their founders.'

Virtue in a short person.—' His soul had but a short diocese to visit, and therefore might the better attend the effectual informing thereof.'

Intellect in a very tall one.—' Oft times such who are built four stories high, are observed to have little in their cock-loft.'

Naturals.—' Their heads sometimes so little, that there is no room for wit ; sometimes so long, that there is no wit for so much room.'

Negroes.—' The image of God cut in ebony.'

School-divinity.—' At the first it will be as welcome to thee as a prison, and their very solutions will seem knots unto thee.'

Mr. Perkins, the Divine.—' He had a capacious head, with angles winding and roomy enough to lodge all controversial intricacies.'

The same.—' He would pronounce the word *Damn* with such an emphasis as left a doleful echo in his auditors' ears a good while after.'

Judges in capital cases.—' O let him take heed how he strikes, that hath a dead hand.'

Memory.—' Philosophers place it in the rear of the head, and it seems the mine of memory lies there, because there men naturally dig for it, scratching it when they are at a loss.'

Fancy.—' It is the most boundless and restless faculty of the soul ; for while the Understanding and the Will are kept, as it were, *in libera custodia* to their objects of *verum*

[1] my readers] the Readers of the *Reflector* 1811.

et bonum, the Fancy is free from all engagements : it digs without spade, sails without ship, flies without wings, builds without charges, fights without bloodshed ; in a moment striding from the centre to the circumference of the world ; by a kind of omnipotency creating and annihilating things in an instant ; and things divorced in Nature are married in Fancy as in a lawless place.'

Infants.—'Some, admiring what motives to mirth infants meet with in their silent and solitary smiles, have resolved, how truly I know not, that then they converse with angels ; as indeed such cannot among mortals find any fitter companions.'

Music.—'Such is the sociableness of music, it conforms itself to all companies both in mirth and mourning ; complying to improve that passion with which it finds the auditors most affected. In a word, it is an invention which might have beseemed a son of Seth to have been the father thereof : though better it was that Cain's great grandchild should have the credit first to find it, than the world the unhappiness longer to have wanted it.'

St. Monica.—'Drawing near her death, she sent most pious thoughts as harbingers to heaven, and her soul saw a glimpse of happiness through the chinks of her sickness-broken body.'[a]

Mortality.—'To smell to a turf of fresh earth is wholesome for the body, no less are thoughts of mortality cordial to the soul.'

Virgin.—'No lording husband shall at the same time command her presence and distance ; to be always near in constant attendance, and always to stand aloof in awful observance.'

Elder Brother.—'Is one who made haste to come into the world to bring his parents the first news of male posterity, and is well rewarded for his tidings.'

Bishop Fletcher.—'His pride was rather on him than in him, as only gait and gesture deep, not sinking to his heart, though causelessly condemned for a proud man, as who was a *good hypocrite*, and far more humble than he appeared.'

[a] The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new lights through chinks which time has made.—WALLER.

Masters of Colleges.—'A little allay of dulness in a Master of a College makes him fitter to manage secular affairs.'

The Good Yeoman.—'Is a gentleman in ore, whom the next age may see refined.'

Good Parent.—'For his love, therein, like a well-drawn picture, he eyes all his children alike.'

Deformity in Children.—'This partiality is tyranny, when parents despise those that are deformed; *enough to break those whom God had bowed before.*'

Good Master.—'In correcting his servant he becomes not a slave to his own passion. Not cruelly making new *indentures* of the flesh of his apprentice. He is tender of his servant in sickness and age. If crippled in his service, his house is his hospital. Yet how many throw away those dry bones, out of the which themselves have sucked the marrow!'

Good Widow.—'If she can speak but little good of him [her dead husband] she speaks but little of him. So handsomely folding up her discourse, that his virtues are shewn outwards, and his vices wrapt up in silence; as counting it barbarism to throw dirt on his memory who hath moulds cast on his body.'

Horses.—'These are men's wings, wherewith they make much speed. A generous creature a horse is, sensible in some sort of honour; and made most handsome by that which deforms men most—pride.'

Martyrdom.—'Heart of oak hath sometime warped a little in the scorching heat of persecution. Their want of true courage herein cannot be excused. Yet many censure them for surrendering up their forts after a long siege, who would have yielded up their own at the first summons. Oh! there is more required to make one valiant, than to call Cranmer or Jewel coward; as if the fire in Smithfield had been no hotter than what is painted in the Book of Martyrs.'

Text of St. Paul.—'St. Paul saith, let not the sun go down on your wrath, to carry news to the antipodes in another world of thy revengeful nature. Yet let us take the Apostle's meaning rather than his words, with all possible speed to depose our passion; not understanding him so literally, that we may take leave to be angry till sunset:

then might our wrath lengthen with the days; and men in Greenland, where [1]the day lasts above a quarter of a year, have plentiful scope for revenge.'[a]

Bishop Brownrig.—'He carried learning enough *in numerato* about him in his pockets for any discourse, and had much more at home in his chests for any serious dispute.'

Modest Want.—'Those that with diligence fight against poverty, though neither conquer till death makes it a drawn battle; expect not but prevent their craving of thee: for God forbid the heavens should never rain, till the earth first opens her mouth; seeing *some grounds will sooner burn than chap.*'

Death-bed Temptations.—'The devil is most busy on the last day of his term; and a tenant to be outed cares not what mischief he doth.'

Conversation.—'Seeing we are civilized Englishmen, let us not be naked savages in our talk.'

Wounded Soldier.—'Halting is the stateliest march of a soldier; and 'tis a brave sight to see the flesh of an ancient as torn as his colours.'

Wat Tyler.—'*A misogrammatist;* if a good Greek word may be given to so barbarous a rebel.'

Heralds.—'Heralds new mould men's names,—taking from them, adding to them, melting out all the liquid letters, torturing mutes to make them speak, and making vowels dumb,—to bring it to a fallacious *homonomy* at the last, that their names may be the same with those noble houses they pretend to.'

Antiquarian Diligence.—'It is most worthy observation, with what diligence he [Camden] enquired after ancient places, making hue and cry after many a city which was run away, and by certain marks and tokens pursuing to find it; as by the situation on the Roman highways, by

[a] This whimsical prevention of a consequence which no one would have thought of deducing,—setting up an absurdum on purpose to hunt it down,—placing guards as it were at the very outposts of possibility,—gravely giving out laws to insanity and prescribing moral fences to distempered intellects, could never have entered into a head less entertainingly constructed than that of Fuller, or Sir Thomas Browne, the very air of whose style the conclusion of this passage most aptly imitates.

[1] the day] day 1811.

just distance from other ancient cities, by some affinity of name, by tradition of the inhabitants, by Roman coins digged up, and by some appearance of ruins. A broken urn is a whole evidence; or an old gate still surviving, out of which the city is run out. Besides, commonly some new spruce town not far off is grown out of the ashes thereof, which yet hath so much natural affection as dutifully to own those reverend ruins for her mother.'

Henry de Essex.—'He is too well known in our English Chronicles, being Baron of Raleigh, in Essex, and Hereditary Standard Bearer of England. It happened in the reign of this king [Henry II.] there was a fierce battle fought in Flintshire, at Coleshall, between the English and Welsh, wherein this Henry de Essex *animum et signum simul abjecit*, betwixt traitor and coward, cast away both his courage and banner together, occasioning a great overthrow of English. But he that had the baseness to do, had the boldness to deny the doing of so foul a fact; until he was challenged in combat by Robert de Momford, a knight, eye-witness thereof, and by him overcome in a duel. Whereupon his large inheritance was confiscated to the king, and he himself, *partly thrust, partly going into a convent, hid his head in a cowl, under which, betwixt shame and sanctity, he blushed out the remainder of his life.*'[a]—Worthies. Article, Bedfordshire.

Sir Edward Harwood, Knt.—'I have read of a bird, which hath a face like, and yet will prey upon, a man; who coming to the water to drink, and finding there by

[a] The fine imagination of Fuller has done what might have been pronounced impossible: it has given an interest, and a holy character, to coward infamy. Nothing can be more beautiful than the concluding account of the last days, and expiatory retirement, of poor Henry de Essex. The address with which the whole of this little story is told is most consummate: the charm of it seems to consist in a perpetual balance of antitheses not too violently opposed, and the consequent activity of mind in which the reader is kept:—'Betwixt traitor and coward'—'baseness to do, boldness to deny'—'partly thrust, partly going, into a convent'—'betwixt shame and sanctity'. The reader by this artifice is taken into a kind of partnership with the writer,—his judgment is exercised in settling the preponderance,—he feels as if he were consulted as to the issue. But the modern historian flings at once the dead weight of his own judgment into the scale, and settles the matter.

reflection, that he had killed one like himself, pineth away by degrees, and never afterwards enjoyeth itself.[a] Such is in some sort the condition of Sir Edward. This accident, that he had killed one in a private quarrel, put a period to his carnal mirth, and was a covering to his eyes all the days of his life. No possible provocations could afterwards tempt him to a duel; and no wonder that one's conscience loathed that whereof he had surfeited. He refused all challenges with more honour than others accepted them; it being well known, that he would set his foot as far in the face of his enemy as any man alive.'—*Worthies. Art. Lincolnshire.*

Decayed Gentry.—'It happened in the reign of King James, when Henry Earl of Huntingdon was Lieutenant of Leicestershire, that a labourer's son in that county was pressed into the wars; as I take it, to go over with Count Mansfield. The old man at Leicester requested his son might be discharged, as being the only staff of his age, who by his industry maintained him and his mother. The Earl demanded his name, which the man for a long time was loth to tell (as suspecting it a fault for so poor a man to confess the truth), at last he told his name was Hastings. "Cousin Hastings," said the Earl, "we cannot all be top branches of the tree, though we all spring from the same root; your son, my kinsman, shall not be pressed." So good was the meeting of modesty in a poor, with courtesy in an honourable person, and gentry I believe in both. And I have reason to believe, that some who justly own the surnames

[a] I do not know where Fuller read of this bird; but a more awful and affecting story, and moralizing of a story, in Natural History, or rather in that Fabulous Natural History, where poets and mythologists found the Phœnix and the Unicorn, and 'other strange fowl', is no where extant. It is a fable which Sir Thomas Browne, if he had heard of it, would have exploded among his Vulgar Errors; but the delight which he would have taken in the discussing of its probabilities, would have shewn that the *truth of the fact*, though the avowed object of his search, was not so much the motive which put him upon the investigation, as those hidden affinities and poetical analogies,—those *essential verities* in the application of strange fable, which made him linger with such reluctant delay among the last fading lights of popular tradition; and not seldom to conjure up a superstition, that had been long extinct, from its dusty grave, to inter it himself with greater ceremonies and solemnities of burial.

and blood of Bohuns, Mortimers, and Plantagenets (though ignorant of their own extractions), are hid in the heap of common people, where they find that under a thatched cottage, which some of their ancestors could not enjoy in a leaded castle,—contentment, with quiet and security.'—*Worthies. Art. Of Shire-Reeves or Shiriffes.*

Tenderness of Conscience in a Tradesman.—'Thomas Curson, born in Allhallows, Lombard-street, armourer, dwelt without Bishopsgate. It happened that a stage-player borrowed a rusty musket, which had lain long leger in his shop: now though his part were comical, he therewith acted an unexpected tragedy, killing one of the standers by, the gun casually going off on the stage, which he suspected not to be charged. O the difference of divers men in the tenderness of their consciences; some are scarce touched with a wound, whilst others are wounded with a touch therein. This poor armourer was highly afflicted therewith, though done against his will, yea without his knowledge, in his absence, by another, out of mere chance. Hereupon he resolved to give all his estate to pious uses: no sooner had he gotten a round sum, but presently he posted with it in his apron to the Court of Aldermen, and was in pain till by their direction he had settled it for the relief of poor in his own and other parishes, and disposed of some hundreds of pounds accordingly, as I am credibly informed by the then churchwardens of the said parish. Thus as he conceived himself casually (though at a great distance) to have occasioned the death of one, he was the immediate and direct cause of giving a comfortable living to many.'

Burning of Wickliffe's Body by Order of the Council of Constance.—'Hitherto [A.D. 1428] the corpse of John Wickliffe had quietly slept in his grave about forty-one years after his death, till his body was reduced to bones, and his bones almost to dust. For though the earth in the chancel of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, where he was interred, hath not so quick a digestion with the earth of Aceldama, to consume flesh in twenty-four hours, yet such the appetite thereof, and all other English graves, to leave small reversions of a body after so many years. But now such the spleen of the Council of Constance, as they not

only cursed his memory as dying an obstinate heretic, but ordered that his bones (with this charitable caution,—if it may be discerned from the bodies of other faithful people) be taken out of the ground, and thrown far off from any Christian burial. In obedience hereunto, Rich. Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln, Diocesan of Lutterworth, sent his officers (vultures with a quick sight, scent, at a dead carcase) to ungrave him. Accordingly to Lutterworth they come, Sumner, Commissary, Official, Chancellor, Proctors, Doctors, and their servants (so that the remnant of the body would not hold out a bone amongst so many hands), take what was left out of the grave, and burnt them to ashes, and cast them into Swift, a neighbouring brook, running hard by. *Thus this brook* [1]*has conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wickliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over.*' [a]—Church History.[2]

[a] The concluding period of this most lively narrative I will not call a conceit: it is one of the grandest conceptions I ever met with. One feels the ashes of Wickliffe gliding away out of the reach of the Sumners, Commissaries, Officials, Proctors, Doctors, and all the puddering rout of executioners of the impotent rage of the baffled Council: from Swift into Avon, from Avon into Severn, from Severn into the narrow seas, from the narrow seas into the main ocean, where they become the emblem of his doctrine, 'dispersed all the world over.' Hamlet's tracing the body of Cæsar to the clay that stops a beer-barrel, is a no less curious pursuit of 'ruined mortality'; but it is in an inverse ratio to this: it degrades and saddens us, for one part of our nature at least; but this expands the whole of our nature, and gives to the body a sort of ubiquity,—a diffusion, as far as the actions of its partner can have reach or influence.

I have seen this passage smiled at, and set down as a quaint conceit of old Fuller. But what is not a conceit to those who read it in a temper different from that in which the writer composed it? The most pathetic parts of poetry to cold tempers seem and are nonsense, as divinity was to the Greeks foolishness. When Richard II, meditating on his own utter annihilation as to royalty, cries out,

'O that I were a mockery king of snow,
To melt before the sun of Bolingbroke,'

if we have been going on pace for pace with the passion before, this sudden conversion of a strong-felt metaphor into something to be actually realized in nature, like that of Jeremiah, 'Oh! that my head were waters,

[1] has] hath 1811. [2] *For two other extracts from Fuller, contributed by Lamb to* The Indicator, *Jan.* 3, 1821, *see Editor's note on this paper.*

EDAX ON APPETITE

[Composed 1811. Printed in *The Reflector*, No. IV (Oct.—Dec., 1811), Art. XIX. Reprinted in *Works*, 1818. Text of 1818.]

To the Editor of the Reflector

Mr. Reflector,—I am going to lay before you a case of the most iniquitous persecution that ever poor devil suffered.

You must know, then, that I have been visited with a calamity ever since my birth. How shall I mention it without offending delicacy? Yet out it must. My sufferings then have all arisen from a most inordinate appetite——

Not for wealth, not for vast possessions,—then might I have hoped to find a cure in some of those precepts of philosophers or poets,—those verba et voces which Horace speaks of:

> quibus hunc lenire dolorem
> Possis, et magnam morbi deponere partem;

not for glory, not for fame, not for applause,—for against this disease, too, he tells us there are certain piacula, or, as Pope has chosen to render it,

> rhymes, which fresh and fresh applied,
> Will cure the arrant'st puppy of his pride;

nor yet for pleasure, properly so called: the strict and

and mine eyes a fountain of tears,' is strictly and strikingly natural; but come unprepared upon it, and it is a conceit; and so is a 'head' turned into 'waters'.

[We are too apt to indemnify ourselves for some characteristic excellence we are kind enough to concede to a great author, by denying him everything else. Thus Donne and Cowley, by happening to possess more wit and faculty of illustration than other men, are supposed to have been incapable of nature or feeling: they are usually opposed to such writers as Shenstone and Parnel; whereas in the very thickest of their conceits,—in the bewildering maze of their tropes and figures, a warmth of soul and generous feeling shines through, the 'sum' of which, 'forty thousand' of those natural poets, as they are called, 'with all their quantity, could not make up.'—Without any intention of setting Fuller on a level with Donne or Cowley, I think the injustice which has been done him in the denial that he possesses any other qualities than those of a quaint and conceited writer, is of the same kind as that with which these two great Poets have been treated. 1811.]

virtuous lessons which I received in early life from the best of parents,—a pious clergyman of the Church of England, now no more,—I trust have rendered me sufficiently secure on that side :——

No, Sir, for none of these things ; but an appetite, in its coarsest and least metaphorical sense,—an appetite for *food*.

The exorbitances of my arrow-root and pap-dish days I cannot go back far enough to remember, only I have been told, that my mother's constitution not admitting of my being nursed at home, the [1]woman who had the care of me for that purpose used to make most extravagant demands for my pretended excesses in that kind ; which my parents, rather than believe any thing unpleasant of me, chose to impute to the known covetousness and mercenary disposition of that sort of people. This blindness continued on their part after I was sent for home, up to the period when it was thought proper, on account of my advanced age, that I should mix with other boys more unreservedly than I had hitherto done. I was accordingly sent to boarding-school.

Here the melancholy truth became too apparent to be disguised. The prying republic of which a great school consists, soon found me out : there was no shifting the blame any longer upon other people's shoulders,—no good-natured maid to take upon herself the enormities of which I stood accused in the article of bread and butter, besides the crying sin of stolen ends of puddings, and cold pies strangely missing. The truth was but too manifest in my looks,—in the evident signs of inanition which I exhibited after the fullest meals, in spite of the double allowance which my master was privately instructed by my kind parents to give me. The sense of the ridiculous, which is but too much alive in grown persons, is tenfold more active and alert in boys. Once detected, I was the constant butt of their arrows,—the mark against which every puny leveller directed his little shaft of scorn. The very Graduses and Thesauruses were raked for phrases to pelt me with by the tiny pedants. Ventri natus,—Ventri deditus,—Vesana gula,—Escarum gurges,—Dapibus indulgens,—Non dans frœna gulæ,—Sectans lautæ fercula mensæ, resounded

[1] woman] women 1811.

wheresoever I past. I lead a weary life, suffering the penalties of guilt for that which was no crime, but only following the blameless dictates of nature. The remembrance of those childish reproaches haunts me yet oftentimes in my dreams. My school-days come again, and the horror I used to feel, when in some silent corner retired from the notice of my unfeeling playfellows, I have sat to mumble the solitary slice of gingerbread allotted me by the bounty of considerate friends, and have ached at heart because I could not spare a portion of it, as I saw other boys do, to some favourite boy ;—for if I know my own heart, I was never selfish,—never possessed a luxury which I did not hasten to communicate to others ; but my food, alas ! was none ; it was an indispensable necessary ; I could as soon have spared the blood in my veins, as have parted that with my companions.

Well, no one stage of suffering lasts for ever : we should grow reconciled to it at length, I suppose, if it did. The miseries of my school-days had their end ; I was once more restored to the paternal dwelling. The affectionate solicitude of my parents was directed to the good-natured purpose of concealing even from myself the infirmity which haunted me. I was continually told that I was growing, and the appetite I displayed was humanely represented as being nothing more than a symptom and an effect of that. I used even to be complimented upon it. But this temporary fiction could not endure above a year or two. I ceased to grow, but alas ! I did not cease my demands for alimentary sustenance.

Those times are long since past, and with them have ceased to exist the fond concealment, — the indulgent blindness,—the delicate over-looking,—the compassionate fiction. I and my infirmity are left exposed and bare to the broad, unwinking eye of the world, which nothing can elude. My meals are scanned, my mouthfuls weighed in a balance : that which appetite demands, is set down to the account of gluttony,—a sin which my whole soul abhors, nay, which Nature herself has put it out of my power to commit. I am constitutionally disenabled from that vice ; for how can he be guilty of excess, who never can get enough? Let them cease, then, to watch my plate ; and leave off their

ungracious comparisons of it to the seven baskets of fragments, and the supernaturally-replenished cup of old Baucis; and be thankful that their more phlegmatic stomachs, not their virtue, have saved them from the like reproaches. I do not see that any of them desist from eating till the holy rage of hunger, as some one calls it, is supplied. Alas! I am doomed to stop short of that continence.

What am I to do? I am by disposition inclined to conviviality, and the social meal. I am no gourmand: I require no dainties: I should despise the board of Heliogabalus, except for its long sitting. Those vivacious, long-continued meals of the latter Romans, indeed I justly envy; but the kind of fare which the Curii and Dentati put up with, I could be content with. Dentatus I have been called, among other unsavory jests. Double-meal is another name which my acquaintance have palmed upon me, for an innocent piece of policy which I put in practice for some time without being found out; which was,—going the round of my friends, beginning with the most primitive feeders among them, who take their dinner about one o'clock, and so successively dropping in upon the next and the next, till by the time I got among my more fashionable intimates, whose hour was six or seven, I have nearly made up the body of a just and complete meal (as I reckon it), without taking more than one dinner (as they account of dinners) at [1]one person's house. Since I have been found out, I endeavour to make up by a damper, as I call it, at home, before I go out. But alas! with me, increase of appetite truly grows by what it feeds on. What is peculiarly offensive to me at those dinner-parties is, the senseless custom of cheese, and the dessert afterwards. I have a rational antipathy to the former; and for fruit, and those other vain vegetable substitutes for meat (meat, the only legitimate aliment for human creatures since the flood, as I take it to be deduced from that permission, or ordinance rather, given to Noah and his descendants), I hold them in perfect contempt. Hay for Horses. I remember a pretty apologue, which Mandeville tells very much to this purpose in his Fable of the Bees:—He brings in a Lion arguing with a Merchant,

[1] one] any one 1811.

who had ventured to expostulate with this king of beasts upon his violent methods of feeding. The lion thus retorts : —'Savage I am, but no Creature can be called Cruel but what either by Malice or Insensibility extinguishes his natural Pity : The Lion was born without Compassion ; we follow the instinct of our Nature ; the Gods have appointed us to live upon the waste and spoil of other Animals, and as long as we can meet with dead ones, we never hunt after the Living. 'Tis only Man, mischievous Man, that can make Death a sport. Nature taught your stomach to crave nothing but Vegetables.'—(Under favour of the Lion, if he meant to assert this universally of mankind, it is not true. However, what he says presently is very sensible.)—'Your violent fondness to change, and greater eagerness after Novelties, have prompted you to the destruction of Animals without Justice or Necessity. . . . The Lion has a ferment within him, that consumes the toughest Skin and hardest Bones, as well as the Flesh of all Animals without exception : Your squeamish Stomach, in which the Digestive Heat is weak and inconsiderable, won't so much as admit of the most tender Parts of them, unless above half the Concoction has been performed by artificial Fire beforehand ; and yet what Animal have you spared, to satisfy the Caprices of a languid Appetite? Languid I say ; for what is Man's Hunger if compared to the Lion's? Yours, when it is at the worst, makes you Faint ; mine makes me Mad : Oft have I tried with Roots and Herbs to allay the violence of it, but in vain ; nothing but large quantities of Flesh can any ways appease it.'—Allowing for the Lion not having a prophetic instinct to take in every lusus naturæ that was possible of the human appetite, he was, generally speaking, in the right ; and the Merchant was so impressed with his argument that, we are told, he replied not, but fainted away. O, Mr. Reflector, that I were not obliged to add, that the creature who thus argues was but a type of me ! Miserable man ! *I am that Lion.* 'Oft have I tried with roots and herbs to allay [1]that violence, but in vain ; nothing but——.'

Those tales which are renewed as often as the editors of papers want to fill up a space in their unfeeling columns, of

[1] that] the 1811.

great eaters,—people that devour whole geese and legs of mutton *for wagers*, are sometimes attempted to be drawn to a parallel with my case. This wilful confounding of motives and circumstances, which make all the difference of moral or immoral in actions, just suits the sort of talent which some of my acquaintance pride themselves upon. *Wagers!*—I thank heaven, I was never mercenary, nor could consent to prostitute a gift (though but a left-handed one) of nature, to the enlarging of my worldly substance; prudent as the necessities, which that fatal gift have involved me in, might have made such a prostitution to appear in the eyes of an indelicate world.

Rather let me say, that to the satisfaction of that talent which was given me, I have been content to sacrifice no common expectations; for such I had from an old lady, a near relation of our family, in whose good graces I had the fortune to stand, till one fatal evening——. You have seen, Mr. Reflector, if you have ever passed your time much in country towns, the kind of suppers which elderly ladies in those places have lying in petto in an adjoining parlour, next to that where they are entertaining their periodically-invited coevals with cards and muffins. The cloth is usually spread some half-hour before the final rubber is decided, whence they adjourn to sup upon what may emphatically be called *nothing*. A sliver of ham, purposely contrived to be transparent to shew the china-dish through it, neighbouring a slip of invisible brawn, which abuts upon something they call a tartlet, as that is bravely supported by an atom of marmalade, flanked in its turn by a grain of potted beef, with a power of such dishlings, *minims of hospitality*, spread in defiance of human nature, or rather with an utter ignorance of what it demands. Being engaged at one of these card-parties, I was obliged to go a little before *supper-time* (as they facetiously call the point of time in which they are taking these shadowy refections), and the old lady, with a sort of fear shining through the smile of courteous hospitality that beamed in her countenance, begged me to step into the next room and take something before I went out in the cold,—a proposal which lay not in my nature to deny. Indignant at the airy prospect I saw before me, I set to, and in a trice dispatched the whole meal

intended for eleven persons,—fish, flesh, fowl, pastry,—to the sprigs of garnishing parsley, and the last fearful custard that quaked upon the board. I need not describe the consternation, when in due time the dowagers adjourned from their cards. Where was the supper?—and the servants' answer, Mr. —— had eat it all.—That freak, however, jested me out of a good three hundred pounds a year, which I afterwards was informed for a certainty the old lady meant to leave me. I mention it not in illustration of the unhappy faculty which I am possessed of; for any unlucky wag of a school-boy, with a tolerable appetite, could have done as much without feeling any hurt after it,—only that you may judge whether I am a man likely to set my talent to sale, or to require the pitiful stimulus of a wager.

I have read in Pliny, or in some author of that stamp, of a reptile in Africa, whose venom is of that hot, destructive quality, that wheresoever it fastens its tooth, the whole substance of the animal that has been bitten in a few seconds is reduced to dust, crumbles away, and absolutely disappears: it is called from this quality, the Annihilator. Why am I forced to seek, in all the most prodigious and portentous facts of Natural History, for creatures typical of myself? *I am that Snake, that Annihilator:* 'wherever I fasten, in a few seconds——.'

O happy sick men, that are groaning under the want of that very thing, the excess of which is my torment! O fortunate, too fortunate, if you knew your happiness, invalids! What would I not give to exchange this fierce concoctive and digestive heat,—this rabid fury which vexes me, which tears and torments me,—for your quiet, mortified, hermit-like, subdued, and sanctified stomachs,—your cool, chastened inclinations, and coy desires for food!

To what unhappy figuration of the parts intestine I owe this unnatural craving, I must leave to the anatomists and the physicians to determine: they, like the rest of the world, have doubtless their eye upon me; and as I have been cut up alive by the sarcasms of my friends, so I shudder when I contemplate the probability that this animal frame, when its restless appetites shall have ceased their importunity, may be cut up also (horrible suggestion!) to determine in what system of solids or fluids this original sin of

my constitution lay lurking. What work will they make with their acids and alkalines, their serums and coagulums, effervescences, viscous matter, bile, chyle, and acrimonious juices, to explain that cause which Nature, who willed the effect to punish me for my sins, may no less have determined to keep in the dark from them, to punish them for their presumption.

You may ask, Mr. Reflector, to what purpose is my appeal to you: what can you do for me? Alas! I know too well that my case is out of the reach of advice,—out of the reach of consolation. But it is some relief to the wounded heart to impart its tale of misery; and some of my acquaintance, who may read my case in your pages under a borrowed name, may be induced to give it a more humane consideration than I could ever yet obtain from them under my own. Make them, if possible, to *reflect*, that an original peculiarity of constitution is no crime; that not that which goes into the mouth desecrates a man, but that which comes out of it,—such as sarcasm, bitter jests, mocks and taunts, and ill-natured observations; and let them consider, if there be such things (which we have all heard of) as Pious Treachery, Innocent Adultery, &c. whether there may not be also such a thing as Innocent Gluttony.

I shall only subscribe myself,

Your afflicted servant,

EDAX.

HOSPITA ON THE IMMODERATE INDULGENCE OF THE PLEASURES OF THE PALATE

[Composed 1811. Printed in *The Reflector*, No. IV (Oct.—Dec., 1811), Art. XIX. Reprinted in *Works*, 1818. Text unaltered.]

To the Editor of the Reflector

MR. REFLECTOR,—My husband and I are fond of company, and being in easy circumstances, we are seldom without a party to dinner two or three days in a week. The utmost cordiality has hitherto prevailed at our meetings; but there is a young gentleman, a near relation of my husband's, that has lately come among us, whose preposterous

behaviour bids fair, if not timely checked, to disturb our tranquillity. He is too great a favourite with my husband in other respects, for me to remonstrate with him in any other than this distant way. A letter printed in your publication may catch his eye ; for he is a great reader, and makes a point of seeing all the new things that come out. Indeed, he is by no means deficient in understanding. My husband says that he has a good deal of wit ; but for my part I cannot say I am any judge of that, having seldom observed him open his mouth except for purposes very foreign to conversation. In short, Sir, this young gentleman's failing is, an immoderate indulgence of his palate. The first time he dined with us, he thought it necessary to extenuate the length of time he kept the dinner on the table, by declaring that he had taken a very long walk in the morning, and came in fasting ; but as that excuse could not serve above once or twice at most, he has latterly dropped the mask altogether, and chosen to appear in his own proper colours without reserve or apology.

You cannot imagine how unpleasant his conduct has become. His way of staring at the dishes as they are brought in, has absolutely something immodest in it ; it is like the stare of an impudent man of fashion at a fine woman, when she first comes into a room. I am positively in pain for the dishes, and cannot help thinking they have consciousness, and will be put out of countenance, he treats them so like what they are not.

Then again he makes no scruple of keeping a joint of meat on the table, after the cheese and fruit are brought in, till he has what he calls *done with it*. Now how awkward this looks, where there are ladies, you may judge, Mr. Reflector,—how it disturbs the order and comfort of a meal. And yet I always make a point of helping him first, contrary to all good manners,—before any of my female friends are helped,—that he may avoid this very error. I wish he would eat before he comes out.

What makes his proceedings more particularly offensive at our house is, that my husband, though out of common politeness he is obliged to set dishes of animal food before his visitors, yet himself and his whole family (myself included) feed entirely on vegetables. We have a theory,

that animal food is neither wholesome nor natural to man ; and even vegetables we refuse to eat until they have undergone the operation of fire, in consideration of those numberless little living creatures which the glass helps us to detect in every fibre of the plant or root before it be dressed. On the same theory we boil our water, which is our only drink, before we suffer it to come to table. Our children are perfect little Pythagoreans : it would do you good to see them in their nursery, stuffing their dried fruits, figs, raisins, and *milk*, which is the only approach to animal food which is allowed. They have no notion how the substance of a creature that ever had life can become food for another creature. A beef-steak is an absurdity to them ; a mutton-chop, a solecism in terms ; a cutlet, a word absolutely without any meaning ; a butcher is nonsense, except so far as it is taken for a man who delights in blood, or a hero. In this happy state of innocence we have kept their minds, not allowing them to go into the kitchen, or to hear of any preparations for the dressing of animal food, or even to know that such things are practised. But as a state of ignorance is incompatible with a certain age ; and as my eldest girl, who is ten years old next Midsummer, must shortly be introduced into the world and sit at table with us, where she will see some things which will shock all her received notions, I have been endeavouring by little and little to break her mind, and prepare it for the disagreeable impressions which must be forced upon it. The first hint I gave her upon the subject, I could see her recoil from it with the same horror with which we listen to a tale of Anthropophagism ; but she has gradually grown more reconciled to it in some measure, from my telling her that it was the custom of the world,—to which, however senseless, we must submit so far as we could do it with innocence, not to give offence ; and she has shewn so much strength of mind on other occasions, which I have no doubt is owing to the calmness and serenity superinduced by her diet, that I am in good hopes, when the proper season for her *debut* arrives, she may be brought to endure the sight of a roasted chicken or a dish of sweetbreads, for the first time, without fainting. Such being the nature of our little household, you may guess what inroads into the economy of it,—what

revolutions and turnings of things upside down, the example of such a feeder as Mr. ——— is calculated to produce.

I wonder at a time like the present, when the scarcity of every kind of food is so painfully acknowledged, that *shame* has no effect upon him. Can he have read Mr. Malthus's Thoughts on the Ratio of Food to Population? Can he think it reasonable that one man should consume the sustenance of many?

The young gentleman has an agreeable air and person, such as are not unlikely to recommend him on the score of matrimony. But his fortune is not over large; and what prudent young woman would think of embarking hers with a man who would bring three or four mouths (or what is equivalent to them) into a family? She might as reasonably choose a widower in the same circumstances with three or four children.

I cannot think who he takes after. His father and mother, by all accounts, were very moderate eaters; only I have heard that the latter swallowed her victuals very fast, and the former had a tedious custom of sitting long at his meals. Perhaps he takes after both.

I wish you would turn this in your thoughts, Mr. Reflector, and give us your ideas on the subject of excessive eating; and, particularly, of animal food.

HOSPITA.

THE GOOD CLERK, A CHARACTER; WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF 'THE COMPLETE ENGLISH TRADESMAN'

[Composed 1811. Printed in *The Reflector*, No. IV (Oct.—Dec. 1811), Art. XXIII. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

THE GOOD CLERK.—He writeth a fair and swift hand, and is competently versed in the Four First Rules of Arithmetic, in the Rule of Three (which is sometimes called the Golden Rule) and in Practice. We mention these things, that we may leave no room for cavillers to say, that any thing essential hath been omitted in our definition; else, to speak the truth, these are but ordinary accomplishments,

and such as every understrapper at a desk is commonly furnished with. The character we treat of soareth higher.

He is clean and neat in his person; not from a vainglorious desire of setting himself forth to advantage in the eyes of the other sex (with which vanity too many of our young Sparks now-a-days are infected) but to do credit (as we say) to the office. For this reason he evermore taketh care that his desk or his books receive no soil; the which things he is commonly as solicitous to have fair and unblemished, as the owner of a fine horse is to have him appear in good keep.

He riseth early in the morning; not because early rising conduceth to health (though he doth not altogether despise that consideration) but chiefly to the intent that he may be first at the desk. There is his post, there he delighteth to be, unless when his meals, or necessity, calleth him away; which time he alway esteemeth as lost, and maketh as short as possible.

He is temperate in eating and drinking, that he may preserve a clear head and steady hand for his master's service. He is also partly induced to this observation of the rules of temperance by his respect for religion and the laws of his country; which things (it may once for all be noted) do add special assistances to his actions, but do not and cannot furnish the main spring or motive thereto. His first ambition (as appeareth all along) is to be a good Clerk, his next a good Christian, a good Patriot, &c.

Correspondent to this, he keepeth himself honest, not for fear of the laws, but because he hath observed how unseemly an article it maketh in the Day Book, or Ledger, when a sum is set down lost or missing; it being his pride to make these books to agree, and to tally, the one side with the other, with a sort of architectural symmetry and correspondence.

He marrieth, or marrieth not, as best suiteth with his employer's views. Some merchants do the rather desire to have married men in their Counting Houses, because they think the married state a pledge for their servants' integrity, and an incitement to them to be industrious; and it was an observation of a late Lord Mayor of London, that the sons of Clerks do generally prove Clerks themselves, and that Merchants encouraging persons in their employ to

marry, and to have families, was the best method of securing a breed of sober industrious young men attached to the mercantile interest. Be this as it may, such a character as we have been describing, will wait till the pleasure of his employer is known on this point; and regulateth his desires by the custom of the house or firm to which he belongeth.

He avoideth profane oaths and jesting, as so much time lost from his employ; what spare time he hath for conversation, which in a Counting House such as we have been supposing can be but small, he spendeth in putting seasonable questions to such of his fellows (and sometimes *respectfully* to the master himself) who can give him information respecting the price and quality of goods, the state of exchange, or the latest improvements in book-keeping; thus making the motion of his lips, as well as of his fingers, subservient to his master's interest. Not that he refuseth a brisk saying, or a cheerful sally of wit, when it comes unforced, is free of offence, and hath a convenient brevity. For this reason he hath commonly some such phrase as this in his mouth :—

It's a slovenly look
To blot your book.

Or,

Red ink for ornament, black for use,
The best of things are open to abuse.

So upon the eve of any great holyday, of which he keepeth one or two at least every year, he will merrily say in the hearing of a confidential friend, but to none other :—

All work and no play
Makes Jack a dull boy.

Or,

A bow always bent must crack at last.

But then this must always be understood to be spoken confidentially, and, as we say, *under the rose*.

Lastly, his dress is plain without singularity; with no other ornament than the quill, which is the badge of his function, stuck under the dexter ear, and this rather for convenience of having it at hand, when he hath been called away from his desk, and expecteth to resume his seat there again shortly, than from any delight which he taketh in

foppery or ostentation. The colour of his clothes is generally noted to be black rather than brown, brown rather than blue or green. His whole deportment is staid, modest, and civil. His motto is Regularity.——

This Character was sketched, in an interval of business, to divert some of the melancholy hours of a Counting House. It is so little a creature of fancy, that it is scarce any thing more than a recollection of some of those frugal and economical maxims which, about the beginning of the last century, (England's meanest period), were endeavoured to be inculcated and instilled into the breasts of the London Apprentices,[a] by a class of instructors who might not inaptly be termed *The Masters of mean Morals*. The astonishing narrowness and illiberality of the lessons contained in some of those books is inconceivable by those whose studies have not led them that way, and would almost induce one to subscribe to the hard censure which Drayton has passed upon the mercantile spirit :

> *The gripple merchant, born to be the curse*
> *Of this brave Isle.*

I have now lying before me that curious book by Daniel Defoe, ' The Complete English Tradesman.' The pompous detail, the studied analysis of every little mean art, every sneaking address, every trick and subterfuge (short of larceny) that is necessary to the tradesman's occupation, with the hundreds of anecdotes, dialogues (in Defoe's liveliest manner) interspersed, all tending to the same amiable purpose, namely, the sacrificing of every honest emotion of the soul to what he calls the main chance,—if you read it in an *ironical sense*, and as a piece of *covered satire*, make it one of the most amusing books which Defoe ever writ, as much so as any of his best novels. It is difficult to say what his intention was in writing it. It is almost impossible to suppose him in earnest. Yet such is the bent of the book to narrow and to degrade the heart, that if such maxims were as catching and infectious as those of a licentious cast, which happily is not the case, had I been living at that time,

[a] This term designated a larger class of young men than that to which it is now confined; it took in the articled Clerks of Merchants and Bankers, the George Barnwells of the day.

I certainly should have recommended to the Grand Jury of Middlesex, who presented the Fable of the Bees, to have presented this book of Defoe's in preference, as of a far more vile and debasing tendency. I will give one specimen of his advice to the young Tradesman on the *Government of his Temper*. 'The retail tradesman in especial, and even every tradesman in his station, must furnish himself with a competent stock of patience; I mean that sort of patience which is needful to bear with all sorts of impertinence, and the most provoking curiosity that it is impossible to imagine the buyers, even the worst of them, are or can be guilty of. *A tradesman behind his counter must have no flesh and blood about him, no passions, no resentment;* he must never be angry, no not so much as seem to be so, if a customer tumbles him five hundred pounds worth of goods, and scarce bids money for any thing; nay, though they really come to his shop with no intent to buy, as many do, only to see what is to be sold, and though he knows they cannot be better pleased, than they are, at some other shop where they intend to buy, 'tis all one, the tradesman must take it, he must place it to the account of his calling, that *'tis his business to be ill used and resent nothing;* and so must answer as obligingly to those that give him an hour or two's trouble and buy nothing, as he does to those who in half the time lay out ten or twenty pounds. The case is plain, and if some do give him trouble and do not buy, others make amends and do buy; and as for the trouble, 'tis the business of the shop.' Here follows a most admirable story of a mercer who, by his indefatigable meanness and more than Socratic patience under affronts, overcame and reconciled a lady, who upon the report of another lady that he had behaved saucily to some third lady, had determined to shun his shop, but by the over-persuasions of a fourth lady was induced to go to it; which she does, declaring before-hand that she will buy nothing, but give him all the trouble she can. Her attack and his defence, her insolence and his persevering patience, are described in colours worthy of a Mandeville; but it is too long to recite. 'The short inference from this long discourse (says he) is this, that here you see, and I could give you many examples like this, how and in what manner a shop-keeper is to behave

himself in the way of his business; what impertinences, what taunts, flouts, and ridiculous things, he must bear in his trade, and must not shew the least return, or the least signal of disgust: he must have no passions, no fire in his temper; he must be all soft and smooth; nay, if his real temper be naturally fiery and hot, he must shew none of it in his shop; he must be a perfect *complete hypocrite* if he will be a *complete tradesman*.[a] It is true, natural tempers are not to be always counterfeited; the man cannot easily be a lamb in his shop, and a lion in himself; but let it be easy or hard, it must be done, and is done: there are men who have by custom and usage brought themselves to it, that nothing could be meeker and milder than they, when behind the counter, and yet nothing be more furious and raging in every other part of life; nay the provocations they have met with in their shops have so irritated their rage, that they would go up stairs from their shop, and fall into frenzies, and a kind of madness, and beat their heads against the wall, and perhaps mischief themselves, if not prevented, till the violence of it had gotten vent, and the passions abate and cool. I heard once of a shop-keeper that behaved himself thus to such an extreme, that when he was provoked by the impertinence of the customers, beyond what his temper could bear, he would go up stairs and beat his wife, kick his children about like dogs, and be as furious for two or three minutes, as a man chained down in Bedlam; and again, when that heat was over, would sit down and cry faster than the children he had abused; and after the fit, he would go down into the shop again, and be as humble, courteous, and as calm as any man whatever; so absolute a government of his passions had he in the shop and so little out of it: in the shop, a soul-less animal that would resent nothing; and in the family a madman: in the shop, meek like a lamb; but in the family, outrageous like a Libyan lion. The sum of the matter is, it is necessary for a tradesman to subject himself by all the ways possible to his business; *his customers are to be his idols: so far as he may worship idols by allowance, he is to bow down to them, and worship them;* at least he is not

[a] As no qualification accompanies this maxim, it must be understood as the genuine sentiment of the Author!

in any way to displease them, or shew any disgust or distaste whatsoever they may say or do ; the bottom of all is, that he is intending to get money by them, and it is not for him that gets money to offer the least inconvenience to them by whom he gets it ; he is to consider that, as Solomon says, the borrower is servant to the lender, so the seller is servant to the buyer.'—What he says on the head of *Pleasures and Recreations* is not less amusing :—' The tradesman's pleasure should be in his business, his companions should be his books, (he means his Ledger, Waste-book, &c.) and if he has a family, he makes *his excursions up stairs and no further :*—none of my cautions aim at restraining a tradesman from diverting himself, as we call it, with his fireside, or keeping company with his wife and children.'—Liberal allowance ; nay, almost licentious and criminal indulgence !—but it is time to dismiss this *Philosopher of Meanness.* More of this stuff would illiberalize the pages of the *Reflector.* Was the man in earnest, when he could bring such powers of description, and all the charms of natural eloquence, in commendation of the meanest, vilest, wretchedest degradations of the human character?—Or did he not rather laugh in his sleeve at the doctrines which he inculcated, and retorting upon the grave Citizens of London their own arts, palm upon them a sample of disguised Satire under the name of wholesome Instruction?

L. B.

MEMOIR OF ROBERT LLOYD

[Composed Sept. or Oct. 1811. Printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine,* Nov., 1811. Reprinted by Mr. E. V. Lucas in *Charles Lamb and The Lloyds,* 1898.]

—Also, in October, in his 33d year, Mr. Robert Lloyd, third son of Charles Lloyd. To dilate in many words upon his character, would be to violate the modest regard due to his memory, who in his lifetime shrunk so anxiously from every species of notice. His constitutional misfortune was an excess of nervous sensibility, which in the purest of hearts produced rather too great a spirit of self-abasement, a perpetual apprehension of not doing what was right.

Yet, beyond this tenderness, he seemed absolutely to have no self-regards at all. His eye was single, and ever fixed upon that form of goodness, which he venerated wherever he found it, except in himself. What he was to his parents, and in his family, the newness of their sorrow may make it unseasonable to touch at; his loss, alas! was but one in a complication of domestic afflictions which have fallen so heavy of late upon a very worthy house. But as a friend, the writer of this memorial can witness, that what he once esteemed and loved, it was an unalterable law of his mind to continue to esteem and love. Absences of years, the discontinuance of correspondence, from whatever cause, for ever so great a length of time, made no difference. It seemed as if the affectionate part of his nature could suffer no abatement. The display of what the world calls shining talents, would have been incompatible with a character like his; but he oftentimes let fall, in his familiar talk, and in his letters, bright and original illustrations of feeling, which might have been mistaken for genius, if his own watchful modest spirit had not constantly interposed to recall and substitute for them some of the ordinary forms of observation, which lay less out of that circle of common sympathy, within which his kind nature delighted to move.

CONFESSIONS OF A DRUNKARD

[Composed 1812. Printed in *The Philanthropist*, No. IX, Jan., 1813. Reprinted in Basil Montagu's *Some Enquiries into the Effects of Fermented Liquors*, 1814 (2nd ed., 1818); *London Magazine*, vol. vi, p. 117, August, 1822; *Last Essays of Elia*, 2nd ed., 1835. Text of 1822.]

[1]DEHORTATIONS from the use of strong liquors have been the favourite topic of sober declaimers in all ages, and have been received with abundance of applause by water-drinking critics. But with the patient himself, the man that is to be cured, unfortunately their sound has seldom prevailed. Yet the evil is acknowledged, the remedy simple. Abstain. No force can oblige a man to raise the glass to his head against his will. 'Tis as easy as not to steal, not to tell lies.

[1] To the Editor of the Philanthropist. Sir: Dehortations, &c., 1813.

[1]Alas! the hand to pilfer, and the tongue to bear false witness, have no constitutional tendency. These are actions indifferent to them. At the first instance of the reformed will, they can be brought off without a murmur. The itching finger is but a figure in speech, and the tongue of the liar can with the same natural delight give forth useful truths, with which it has been accustomed to scatter their pernicious contraries. But when a man has commenced sot——

O pause, thou sturdy moralist, thou person of stout nerves and a strong head, whose liver is happily untouched, [2]and ere thy gorge riseth at the *name* which I have written, first learn what the *thing* is; how much of compassion, how much of human allowance, thou may'st virtuously mingle with thy disapprobation. [3]Trample not on the ruins of a man. Exact not, under so terrible a penalty as infamy, a resuscitation from a state of death almost as real as that from which Lazarus rose not but by a miracle.

Begin a reformation, and custom will make it easy. But what if the beginning be dreadful, the first steps not like climbing a mountain but going through fire? what if the whole system must undergo a change violent as that which we conceive of the mutation of form in some insects? what if a process comparable to flaying alive be to be gone through? is the weakness [4]that sinks under such struggles to be confounded with the pertinacity which clings to other vices, which have induced no constitutional necessity, no engagement of the whole victim, body and soul?

[5]I have known one in that state, when he has tried to abstain but for one evening,—though the poisonous potion had long ceased to bring back its first enchantments, though he was sure it would rather deepen his gloom than brighten it,—in the violence of the struggle, and the necessity he has felt of getting rid of the present sensation at any rate, I have known him to scream out, to cry aloud, for the anguish and pain of the strife within him.

Why should I hesitate to declare, that the man of whom

[1] *This paragraph is wanting in* 1813. [2] and ere . . . of compassion] and first learn how much of compassion 1813. [3] Trample . . . miracle. *omit* 1813. [4] that] which 1813. [5] I have . . . when] I have known one in such state, that when 1813.

I speak is myself? [1]I have no puling apology to make to mankind. I see them all in one way or another deviating from the pure reason. It is to my own nature alone I am accountable for the woe that I have brought upon it.

I believe that there are constitutions, robust heads and iron insides, whom scarce any excesses can hurt; whom brandy (I have seen them drink it like wine), at all events whom wine, taken in ever so plentiful measure, can do no worse injury to than just to muddle their faculties, perhaps never very pellucid. On them this discourse is wasted. They would but laugh at a weak brother, who, trying his strength with them, and coming off foiled from the contest, would fain persuade them that such agonistic exercises are dangerous. It is to a very different description of persons I speak. It is to the weak, the nervous; to those who feel the want of some artificial aid to raise their spirits in society to what is no more than the ordinary pitch of all around them without it. This is the secret of our drinking. Such must fly the convivial board in the first instance, if they do not mean to sell themselves for term of life.

Twelve years ago I had completed my six and twentieth year. I had lived from the period of leaving school to that time pretty much in solitude. My companions were chiefly books, or at most one or two living ones of my own book-loving and sober stamp. I rose early, went to bed betimes, and the faculties which God had given me, I have reason to think, did not rust in me unused.

About that time I fell in with some companions of a different order. They were men of boisterous spirits, sitters up a-nights, disputants, drunken; yet seemed to have something noble [2]about them. We dealt about the wit, or what passes for it after midnight, jovially. Of the quality called fancy I certainly possessed a larger share than my companions. Encouraged by their applause, I set up for a profest joker! I, who of all men am least fitted for such an occupation, having, in addition to the greatest difficulty which I experience at all times of finding words to express my meaning, a natural nervous impediment in my speech!

Reader, if you are gifted with nerves like mine, aspire to any character but that of a wit. When you find a tickling

[1] I have no . . . upon it *omit* 1813. [2] about] in 1813.

relish upon your tongue disposing you to that sort of conversation, especially if you find a preternatural flow of ideas setting in upon you at the sight of a bottle and fresh glasses, avoid giving way to it as you would fly [1]your greatest destruction. If you cannot crush the power of fancy, or that within you which you mistake for such, divert it, give it some other play. Write an essay, pen a character or description,—but not as I do now, with tears trickling down your cheeks.

To be an object of compassion to friends, of derision to foes ; to be suspected by strangers, stared at by fools ; to be esteemed dull when you cannot be witty, to be applauded for witty when you know that you have been dull ; to be called upon for the extemporaneous exercise of that faculty which no premeditation can give ; to be spurred on to efforts which end in contempt ; to be set on to provoke mirth which procures the procurer hatred ; to give pleasure and [2]be paid with squinting malice ; to swallow draughts of life-destroying wine which are to be distilled into airy breath to tickle vain auditors ; to mortgage miserable morrows for nights of madness ; to waste whole seas of time upon those who pay it back in little inconsiderable drops of grudging applause,—are the wages of [3]buffoonery and death.

Time, which has a sure [4]stroke at dissolving all connexions which have no solider fastening than this liquid cement, more kind to me than my own taste or penetration, at length opened my eyes to the supposed qualities of my first friends. No trace of them is left but in the vices which they introduced, and the habits they infixed. In them my friends survive still, and exercise ample retribution for any supposed [5]infidelity that I may have been guilty of towards them.

My next more immediate companions were and are persons of such intrinsic [6]and felt worth, that though accidentally their acquaintance has proved pernicious to me, I do not [7]know that if the thing were to do over again, I should have the courage to eschew the mischief at the price

[1] your greatest] certain 1813. [2] be] to be 1813. [3] buffoonery and death] buffoonery 1813. [4] stroke . . . solider] hand . . . better 1813. [5] infidelity towards them of which I may have been guilty. 1813. [6] and felt *omit* 1813. [7] know that . . . I should] know, if the thing were to do over again, whether I should 1813.

of forfeiting the benefit. I came to them [1]reeking from the steams of my late over-heated notions of companionship; and the slightest fuel which they unconsciously afforded, was sufficient to feed my old fires into a propensity.

[2]They were no drinkers, but, one from professional habits, and another from a custom derived from his father, smoked tobacco. The devil could not have devised a more subtle trap to re-take a backsliding penitent. The transition, from gulping down draughts of liquid fire to puffing out innocuous blasts of dry smoke, [3]was so like cheating him. [4]But he is too hard for us when we hope to commute. He beats us at barter; and when we think to set off a new failing against an old infirmity, 'tis odds but he puts the trick upon us of two for one. That (comparatively) white devil of tobacco brought with him in the end seven worse than himself.

It were impertinent to carry the reader through all the processes by which, from smoking at first with malt liquor, I took my degrees through thin wines, through stronger wine and water, through small punch, to those juggling compositions, which, under the name of mixed liquors, slur a great deal of brandy or other poison under less and less water continually, until they [5]come next to none, and so to none at all. But it is hateful to disclose the secrets of my Tartarus.

I should repel my readers, from a mere incapacity of believing me, were I to tell them what tobacco has been to me, the drudging service which I have paid, the slavery which I have vowed to it. How, when I have resolved to quit it, a feeling [6]as of ingratitude has started up; how it has put on personal claims and made the demands of a friend upon me. How the reading of it casually in a book, as where Adams takes his whiff in the chimney-corner of some inn in Joseph Andrews, or Piscator in the Complete Angler breaks his fast upon a morning pipe in that delicate room *Piscatoribus Sacrum*, has in a moment broken down the resistance of

[1] reeking from . . . propensity.] reeking with . . . perpetuity. 1813.
[2] They . . . but, one] There were no drinkers among them, except one 1813.
[3] was so . . . him.] was like cheating the old enemy. 1813.
[4] But . . . himself. *omit* 1813.
[5] come next] come to next 1813.
[6] as *omit* 1813.

weeks. How a pipe was ever in my midnight path before me, till the vision forced me to realize it,—how then its ascending vapours curled, its fragrance lulled, and the thousand delicious ministerings conversant about it, employing every faculty, extracted the sense of pain. How from illuminating it came to darken, from a quick solace it turned to a negative relief, thence to a restlessness and dissatisfaction, thence to a positive misery. How, even now, when the whole secret stands confessed in all its dreadful truth before me, I feel myself linked to it beyond the power of revocation. Bone of my bone——

Persons not accustomed to examine the motives of their actions, to reckon up the countless nails that rivet the chains of habit, or perhaps being bound by none so obdurate as those I have confessed [1]to, may recoil from this as from an overcharged picture. [2]But what short of such a bondage is it, which in spite of protesting friends, a weeping wife, and a reprobating world, chains down many a poor fellow, of no original indisposition to goodness, to his pipe and his pot?

I have seen a print after Corregio, in which three female figures are ministering to a man who sits fast bound at the root of a tree. Sensuality is soothing him, Evil Habit is nailing him to a branch, and Repugnance at the same instant of time is applying a snake to his side. In his face is feeble delight, the recollection of past rather than perception of present pleasures, languid enjoyment of evil with utter imbecility to good, a Sybaritic effeminacy, a submission to bondage, the springs of the will gone down like a broken clock, the sin and the suffering co-instantaneous, or the latter forerunning the former, remorse preceding action —all this represented in one point of time.—When I saw this, I admired the wonderful skill of the painter. But when I went away, I wept, because I thought of my own condition.

Of *that* there is no hope that it should ever change. The waters have gone over me. But out of the black depths, could I be heard, I would cry out to all those who have but set a foot in the perilous flood. Could the youth, to whom the flavour of his first wine is delicious as the opening scenes

[1] to *omit* 1813. [2] But . . . is it] But what is it short of such a bondage 1813.

of life, or the entering upon some newly discovered paradise, look into my desolation, and be made to understand what a dreary thing it is when a man shall feel himself going down a precipice with open eyes and a passive will, to see his destruction, [1]and have no power to stop it, and yet to feel it all the way emanating from himself; to perceive all goodness emptied out of him, and yet not to be able to forget a time when it was otherwise; to bear about the piteous spectacle of his own self-ruins:—could he see my fevered eye, feverish with last night's drinking, and feverishly looking for this night's repetition of the folly; could he feel the body of the death out of which I cry hourly with feebler and feebler outcry to be delivered,—it were enough to make him dash the sparkling beverage to the earth in all the pride of its mantling temptation; to make him clasp his teeth,

> and not undo 'em
> To suffer WET DAMNATION to run through 'em.

Yea, but (methinks I hear somebody object) if sobriety be that fine thing you would have us to understand, if the comforts of a cool brain are to be preferred to that state of heated excitement which you describe and deplore, what hinders in your own instance that you do not return to those habits from which you would induce others never to swerve? if the blessing be worth preserving, is it not worth recovering?

Recovering!—O if a wish could transport me back to those days of youth, when a draught from the next clear spring could slake any heats which summer suns and youthful exercise had power to stir up in the blood, how gladly would I return to thee, pure element, the drink of children, and of child-like holy hermit. In my dreams I can sometimes fancy thy cool refreshment purling over my burning tongue. But my waking stomach rejects it. That which refreshes innocence, only makes me sick and faint.

But is there no middle way betwixt total abstinence and the excess which kills you?—For your sake, reader, and that you may never attain to my experience, with pain I must utter [2]the dreadful truth, that there is none, none that I can find. In my stage of habit (I speak not of habits

[1] and . . . to . . . to . . . to . . . to] *omit* . . . *omit* . . . *omit* . . . *omit* 1813.
[2] the dreadful truth *omit* 1813.

less confirmed—for some of them I believe the advice to be most prudential) in the stage which I have reached, to stop short of that measure which is sufficient to draw on torpor and sleep, the benumbing apoplectic sleep of the drunkard, is to have taken none at all. The pain of the self-denial is [1]all one. And what that is, I had rather the reader should believe on my credit, than know from his own trial. He will come to know it, whenever he shall arrive at that state, in which, paradoxical as it may appear, *reason shall only visit him through intoxication :* for it is a fearful truth, that the intellectual faculties by repeated acts of intemperance may be driven from their orderly sphere of action, their clear day-light ministeries, until they shall be brought at last to depend, for the faint manifestation of their departing energies, upon the returning periods of the fatal madness to which they owe their devastation. The drinking man is never less himself than during his sober intervals. Evil is so far his good.[a]

Behold me then, in the robust period of life, reduced to imbecility and decay. Hear me count my gains, and the profits which I have derived from the midnight cup.

Twelve years ago I was possessed of a healthy frame of mind and body. I was never strong, but I think my constitution (for a weak one) was as happily exempt from the tendency to any malady as it was possible to be. I scarce knew what it was to [2]ail any thing. Now, except when I am losing myself in a sea of drink, I am never free from those uneasy sensations in head and stomach, which are so much worse to bear than any definite pains or aches.

At that time I was seldom in bed after six in the morning, summer and winter. I awoke refreshed, and seldom without some merry thoughts in my head, or some piece of a song to welcome the new-born day. Now, the first feeling which besets me, after stretching out the hours of recumbence to

[a] When poor M—— painted his last picture, with a pencil in one trembling hand, and a glass of brandy and water in the other, his fingers owed the comparative steadiness, with which they were enabled to go through their task in an imperfect manner, to a temporary firmness derived from a repetition of practices, the general effect of which had shaken both them and him so terribly.

[1] all one] equal 1813. [2] ail any thing.] have an ailment. 1813.

their last possible extent, is a forecast of the wearisome day that lies before me, with a secret wish that I could have lain on still, or never awaked.

Life itself, my waking life, has much of the confusion, the trouble, and obscure perplexity, of an ill dream. In the daytime I stumble upon dark mountains.

Business, which, though never particularly adapted to my nature, yet as something of necessity to be gone through, and therefore best undertaken with cheerfulness, I used to enter upon with some degree of alacrity, now wearies, affrights, perplexes me. I fancy all sorts of discouragements, and am ready to give up an occupation which gives me bread, from a harassing conceit of incapacity. The slightest commission given me by a friend, or any small duty which I have to perform for myself, as giving orders to a tradesman, &c. haunts me as a labour impossible to be got through. So much the springs of action are broken.

The same cowardice attends me in all my intercourse with mankind. I dare not promise that a friend's honour, or his cause, would be safe in my keeping, if I were put to the expense of any manly resolution in defending it. So much the springs of moral action are deadened within me.

My favourite occupations in times past, now cease to entertain. I can do nothing readily. Application for ever so short a time kills me. This poor abstract of my condition was penned at long intervals, with scarcely any attempt at connexion of thought, which is now difficult to me.

The noble passages which formerly delighted me in history or poetic fiction, now only draw a few weak tears, allied to dotage. My broken and dispirited nature seems to sink before any thing great and admirable.

I perpetually catch myself in tears, for any cause, or none. It is inexpressible how much this infirmity adds to a sense of shame, and a general feeling of deterioration.

These are some of the instances, concerning which I can say with truth, that it was not always so with me.

Shall I lift up the veil of my weakness any further? or is this disclosure sufficient?

I am a poor nameless egotist, who have no vanity to consult by these Confessions. I know not whether I shall be laughed at, or heard seriously. Such as they are, I com-

mend them to the reader's attention, if he [1]finds his own case any way touched. I have told him what I am come to. Let him stop in time.

[2]ELIA.

RECOLLECTIONS OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

[Composed probably 1813. Printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1813, and Supplement, under the title, *On Christ's Hospital and the Character of the Christ's Hospital Boys.* Reprinted in *Works*, 1818. Text of 1818. See Editor's Notes.]

[3]To comfort the desponding parent with the thought that, without diminishing the stock which is imperiously demanded to furnish the more pressing and homely wants of our nature, he has disposed of one or more perhaps out of a numerous offspring, under the shelter of a care scarce less tender than the paternal, where not only their bodily cravings shall be supplied, but that mental *pabulum* is also dispensed, which HE hath declared to be no less necessary to our sustenance, who said, that 'not by bread alone man [4]can live'; for this Christ's Hospital unfolds her bounty. Here neither, on the one hand, are the youth lifted up above their family, which we [5]must suppose liberal though reduced; nor, on the other hand, are they liable to be depressed below its level by the mean habits and sentiments which a common charity-school generates. It is, in a word, an Institution to keep those who have yet held up their heads in the world from sinking; to keep alive the spirit of a decent household, when poverty was in danger of crushing it; to assist those who are the most willing, but not always the most able, to assist themselves; to separate a child from his family for a season, in order to render him back hereafter, with feelings and habits more congenial to it, than he could even have attained by remaining at home in the bosom of it. It is a preserving and renovating principle, an antidote for the *res angusta domi*, when it presses, as it always does, most heavily upon the most ingenuous natures.

[1] finds] find 1813. [2] *This article is unsigned in* THE PHILANTHROPIST. [3] *For three introductory paragraphs* (1813) *omitted here see Editor's Notes.* [4] can live; for this . . . bounty] can live. 1813. [5] must suppose] have supposed 1813.

This is Christ's Hospital; and whether its character would be improved by confining its advantages to the very lowest of the people, let those judge who have witnessed the looks, the gestures, the behaviour, the manner of their play with one another, their deportment towards strangers, the whole aspect and physiognomy of that vast assemblage of boys on the London foundation, who freshen and make alive again with their sports the else mouldering cloisters of the old Grey Friars—which strangers who have never witnessed, if they pass through Newgate-street, or by Smithfield, would do well to go a little out of their way [1]to see.

For the Christ's Hospital boy feels that he is no charity-boy; he feels it in the antiquity and regality of the foundation to which he belongs; in the usage which he meets with at school, and the treatment he is accustomed to out of its bounds; in the respect, and even kindness, which his well known garb never fails to procure him in the streets of the metropolis; he feels it in his education, in that measure of classical attainments, which every individual at that school, though not destined to a learned profession, has it in his power to procure, attainments which it would be worse than folly to put it in the reach of the labouring classes to acquire: he feels it in the numberless comforts, and even magnificences, which surround him; in his old and awful cloisters, with their traditions; in his spacious school-rooms, and in the well-ordered, airy, and lofty rooms where he sleeps; in his stately dining-hall, hung round with pictures by Verrio, Lely, and others, one of them surpassing in size and grandeur almost any other in the [a] kingdom; above all, in the very extent and magnitude of the body to which he belongs, and the consequent spirit, the intelligence, and public conscience, which is the result of so many various

[a] By Verrio, representing James the Second on his throne, surrounded by his courtiers, (all curious portraits,) receiving the mathematical pupils at their annual presentation, a custom still kept up on New-year's-day at Court.

[1] to see.] to see: let those judge, I say, who have compared this scene with the abject countenances, the squalid mirth, the broken-down spirit, and crouching, or else fierce and brutal deportment to strangers, of the very different sets of little beings who range round the precincts of common orphan schools and places of charity. 1813.

yet wonderfully combining members. Compared with this last-named advantage, what is the stock of information, (I do not here speak of book-learning, but of that knowledge which boy receives from boy,) the mass of collected opinions, the intelligence in common, among the few and narrow members of an ordinary boarding-school ?

The Christ's Hospital or Blue-coat boy, has a distinctive character of his own, as far removed from the abject qualities of a common charity-boy as it is from the disgusting forwardness of a lad brought up at some other of the public schools. There is *pride* in it, accumulated from the circumstances which I have described as differencing him from the former ; and there is a *restraining modesty*, from a sense of obligation and dependence, which must ever keep his deportment from assimilating to that of the latter. His very garb, as it is antique and venerable, feeds his self-respect ; as it is a badge of dependence, it restrains the natural petulance of that age from breaking out into overt-acts of insolence. This produces silence and a reserve before strangers, yet not that cowardly shyness which boys mewed up at home will feel ; he will speak up when spoken to, but the stranger must begin the conversation with him. Within his bounds he is all fire and play ; but in the streets he steals along with all the self-concentration of a young monk. He is never known to mix with other boys, they are a sort of laity to him. All this proceeds, I have no doubt, from the continual consciousness which he carries about him of the difference of his dress from that of the rest of the world ; with a modest jealousy over himself, lest, by over-hastily mixing with common and secular playfellows, he should commit the dignity of his cloth. Nor let any one laugh at this ; for, considering the propensity of the multitude, and especially of the small multitude, to ridicule any thing unusual in dress—above all, where such peculiarity may be construed by malice into a mark of disparagement—this reserve will appear to be nothing more than a wise instinct in the Blue-coat boy. That it is neither pride nor rusticity, at least that it has none of the offensive qualities of either, a stranger may soon satisfy himself by putting a question to any of these boys : he may be sure of an answer couched in terms of plain civility,

neither loquacious nor embarrassed. Let him put the same question to a parish-boy, or to one of the trencher-caps in the —— cloisters, and the impudent reply of the one shall not fail to exasperate any more than the certain servility, and mercenary eye to reward, which he will meet with in the other, can fail to depress and sadden him.

The Christ's Hospital boy is a religious character. His school is eminently a religious foundation; it has its peculiar prayers, its services at set times, its graces, hymns, and anthems, following each other in an almost monastic closeness of succession. This religious character in him is not always untinged with superstition. That is not wonderful, when we consider the thousand tales and traditions which must circulate, with undisturbed credulity, amongst so many boys, that have so few checks to their belief from any intercourse with the world at large; upon whom their equals in age must work so much, their elders so little. With this leaning towards an over-belief in matters of religion, which will soon correct itself when he comes out into society, may be classed a turn for romance above most other boys. This is to be traced in the same manner to their excess of society with each other, and defect of mingling with the world. Hence the peculiar avidity with which such books as the Arabian Nights Entertainments, and others of a still wilder cast, are, or at least were in my time, sought for by the boys. I remember when some half-dozen of them set off from school, without map, card, or compass, on a serious expedition to find out *Philip Quarll's Island*.

The Christ's Hospital boy's sense of right and wrong is peculiarly tender and apprehensive. It is even apt to run out into ceremonial observances, and to impose a yoke upon itself beyond the strict obligations of the moral law. Those who were contemporaries with me at that School [1]thirty years ago, will remember with what more than Judaic rigour the eating of the fat of certain boiled meats[a] was interdicted. A boy would have blushed, as at the exposure of some heinous immorality, to have been detected eating that forbidden portion of his allowance of animal

[a] Under the denomination of *gags*.

[1] thirty] five and twenty or thirty 1813.

food, the whole of which, while he was in health, was little more than sufficient to allay his hunger. The same, or even greater, refinement, was shewn in the rejection of certain kinds of sweet-cake. What gave rise to these supererogatory penances, these self-denying ordinances, I could never learn ; [a]they certainly argue no defect of the conscientious principle. A little excess in that article is not undesirable in youth, to make allowance for the inevitable waste which comes in maturer years. But in the less ambiguous line of duty, in those directions of the moral feelings which cannot be mistaken or depreciated, I will relate what took place in the year 1785, when Mr. Perry, the steward, died. I must be pardoned for taking my instances from my own times. Indeed, the vividness of my recollections, while I am upon this subject, almost brings back those times ; they are present to me still. But I believe that in the years which have elapsed since the period which I speak of, the character of the Christ's Hospital boy is very little changed. Their situation in point of many comforts is improved ; but that which I ventured before to term the *public conscience* of the school, the pervading moral sense, of which every mind partakes, and to which so many individual minds contribute, remains, I believe, pretty much the same as when I left it. I have seen within this twelvemonth almost the change which has been produced upon a boy of eight or nine years of age, upon being admitted into that school ; how, from a pert young coxcomb, who thought that all knowledge was comprehended within his shallow brains, because a smattering of two or three languages and one or two sciences were stuffed into him by injudicious treatment at home, by a mixture with the wholesome society of so many schoolfellows, in

[a] I am told that the [1]late steward, Mr. Hathaway, who evinced on many occasions a most praiseworthy anxiety to promote the comfort of the boys, had occasion for all his address and perseverance to eradicate the first of these unfortunate prejudices, in which [2]he at length happily succeeded, and thereby restored to one-half of the animal nutrition of the school those honors which painful superstition and blind zeal had so long conspired to withhold from it.

[1] late . . . evinced] present steward, who has evinced 1813. [2] he] he has 1813.

less time than I have spoken of, he has sunk to his own level, and is contented to be carried on in the quiet orb of modest self-knowledge in which the common mass of that unpresumptuous assemblage of boys seem to move: from being a little unfeeling mortal, he has got to feel and reflect. Nor would it be a difficult matter to shew how, at a school like this, where the boy is neither entirely separated from home, nor yet exclusively under its influence, the best feelings, the filial for instance, are brought to a maturity which they could not have attained under a completely domestic education; how the relation of parent is rendered less tender by unremitted association, and the very awfulness of age is best apprehended by some sojourning amidst the comparative levity of youth; how absence, not drawn out by too great extension into alienation or forgetfulness, puts an edge upon the relish of occasional intercourse, and the boy is made the better *child* by that which keeps the force of that relation from being felt as perpetually pressing on him; how the substituted paternity, into the care of which he is adopted, while in everything substantial it makes up for the natural, in the necessary omission of individual fondnesses and partialities, directs the mind only the more strongly to appreciate that natural and first tie, in which such weaknesses are the bond of strength, and the appetite which craves after them betrays no perverse palate. But these speculations rather belong to the question of the comparative advantages of a public over a private education in general. I must get back to my favourite school; and to that which took place when our old and good steward died.

And I will say, that when I think of the frequent instances which I have met with in children, of a hard-heartedness, a callousness, and insensibility to the loss of relations, even of those who have begot and nourished them, I cannot but consider it as a proof of something in the peculiar conformation of that school, favourable to the expansion of the best feelings of our nature, that, at the period which I am noticing, out of five hundred boys there was not a dry eye to be found among them, nor a heart that did not beat with genuine emotion. Every impulse to play, until the funeral day was past, seemed suspended throughout the school; and

the boys, lately so mirthful and sprightly, were seen pacing their cloisters alone, or in sad groupes standing about, few of them without some token, such as their slender means could provide, a black ribband, or something to denote respect and a sense of their loss. The time itself was a time of anarchy, a time in which all authority (out of school-hours) was abandoned. The ordinary restraints were for those days superseded; and the gates, which at other times kept us in, were left without watchers. Yet, with the exception of one or two graceless boys at most, who took advantage of that suspension of authority to *skulk out*, as it was called, the whole body of that great school kept rigorously within their bounds, by a voluntary self-imprisonment; and they who broke bounds, though they escaped punishment from any master, fell into a general disrepute among us, and, for that which at any other time would have been applauded and admired as a mark of spirit, were consigned to infamy and reprobation: so much *natural government* have gratitude and the principles of reverence and love, and so much did a respect to their dead friend prevail with these Christ's Hospital boys above any fear which his presence among them when living could ever produce. And if the impressions which were made on my mind so long ago are to be trusted, very richly did their steward deserve this tribute. It is a pleasure to me even now to call to mind his portly form, the regal awe which he always contrived to inspire, in spite of a tenderness and even weakness of nature that would have enfeebled the reins of discipline in any other master; a yearning of tenderness towards those under his protection, which could make five hundred boys at once feel towards him each as to their individual father. He had faults, with which we had nothing to do; but, with all his faults, indeed, Mr. Perry was a most extraordinary creature. Contemporary with him, and still living, though he has long since resigned his occupation, will it be impertinent to mention the name of our excellent upper grammar-master, the Rev. James Boyer? He was a disciplinarian, indeed, of a different stamp from him whom I have just described; but, now the terrors of the rod, and of a temper a little too hasty to leave the more nervous of us quite at our ease to do justice to his

merits in those days, are long since over, ungrateful were we if we should refuse our testimony to that unwearied assiduity with which he attended to the particular improvement of each of us. Had we been the offspring of the first gentry in the land, he could not have been instigated by the strongest views of recompense and reward to have made himself a greater slave to the most laborious of all occupations than he did for us sons of charity, from whom, or from our parents, he could expect nothing. He has had his reward in the satisfaction of having discharged his duty, in the pleasurable consciousness of having advanced the respectability of that institution to which, both man and boy, he was attached; in the honours to which so many of his pupils have successfully aspired at both our Universities; and in the staff with which the Governors of the Hospital at the close of his hard labours, with the highest expressions of the obligations the school lay under to him unanimously voted to present him.

I have often considered it among the felicities of the constitution of this school, that the offices of steward and schoolmaster are kept distinct; the strict business of education alone devolving upon the latter, while the former has the charge of all things out of school, the controul of the provisions, the regulation of meals, of dress, of play, and the ordinary intercourse of the boys. By this division of management, a superior respectability must attach to the teacher while his office is unmixed with any of these lower concerns. A still greater advantage over the construction of common boarding-schools is to be found in the settled salaries of the masters, rendering them totally free of obligation to any individual pupil or his parents. This never fails to have its effect at schools where each boy can reckon up to a hair what profit the master derives from him, where he views him every day in the light of a caterer, a provider for the family, who is to get so much by him in each of his meals. Boys will see and consider these things; and how much must the sacred character of preceptor suffer in their minds by these degrading associations! The very bill which the pupil carries home with him at Christmas, eked out, perhaps, with elaborate though necessary minuteness, instructs him that his teachers have other ends than

the mere love to learning in the lessons which they give him; and though they put into his hands the fine sayings of Seneca or Epictetus, yet they themselves are none of those disinterested pedagogues to teach philosophy *gratis*. The master, too, is sensible that he is seen in this light; and how much this must lessen that affectionate regard to the learners which alone can sweeten the bitter labour of instruction, and convert the whole business into unwelcome and uninteresting taskwork, many preceptors that I have conversed with on the subject are ready, with a sad heart, to acknowledge. From this inconvenience the settled salaries of the masters of this school in great measure exempt them; while the happy custom of chusing masters (indeed every officer of the establishment) from those who have received their education there, gives them an interest in advancing the character of the school, and binds them to observe a tenderness and a respect to the children, in which a stranger, feeling that independence which I have spoken of, might well be expected to fail.

In affectionate recollections of the place where he was bred up, in hearty recognitions of old schoolfellows met with again after the lapse of years, or in foreign countries, the Christ's Hospital boy yields to none; I might almost say, he goes beyond most other boys. The very compass and magnitude of the school, its thousand bearings, the space it takes up in the imagination [1]beyond the ordinary schools, impresses a remembrance, accompanied with an elevation of mind, that attends him through life. It is too big, too affecting an object, to pass away quickly from his mind. The Christ's Hospital boy's friends at school are commonly his intimates through life. For me, I do not know whether a constitutional imbecility does not incline me too obstinately to cling to the remembrances of childhood; in an inverted ratio to the usual sentiments of mankind, nothing that I have been engaged in since seems of any value or importance, compared to the colours which imagination gave to everything then. I belong to no *body corporate* such as I then made a part of.—And here, before I close, taking leave of the general reader, and addressing myself solely to my old schoolfellows, that were contem-

[1] beyond the] beyond the sphere of 1813.

poraries with me from the year 1782 to 1789, let me have leave to remember some of those circumstances of our school, which they will not be unwilling to have brought back to their minds.

And first, let us remember, as first in importance in our childish eyes, the young men (as they almost were) who, under the denomination of *Grecians*, were waiting the expiration of the period when they should be sent, at the charges of the Hospital, to one or other of our Universities, but more frequently to Cambridge. These youths, from their superior acquirements, their superior age and stature, and the fewness of their numbers, (for seldom above two or three at a time were inaugurated into that high order,) drew the eyes of all, and especially of the younger boys, into a reverent observance and admiration. How tall they used to seem to us !—how stately would they pace along the cloisters !—while the play of the lesser boys was absolutely suspended, or its boisterousness at least allayed, at their presence ! Not that they ever beat or struck the boys—that would have been to have demeaned themselves—the dignity of their persons alone insured them all respect. The task of blows, of corporal chastisement, they left to the common monitors, or heads of wards, who, it must be confessed, in our time had rather too much licence allowed them to oppress and misuse their inferiors ; and the interference of the Grecian, who may be considered as the spiritual power, was not unfrequently called for, to mitigate by its mediation the heavy unrelenting arm of this temporal power, or monitor. In fine, the Grecians were the solemn Muftis of the school. Æras were computed from their time ;—it used to be said, such or such a thing was done when S—— or T—— was Grecian.

As I ventured to call the Grecians the Muftis of the school, the king's boys,[a] as their character then was, may well pass for the Janisaries. They were the terror of all the other boys ; bred up under that hardy sailor, as well as excellent mathematician, and co-navigator with Captain Cook, William Wales. All his systems were adapted to fit them for the rough element which they were destined to

[a] The mathematical pupils, bred up to the sea, on the foundation of Charles the Second.

encounter. Frequent and severe punishments, which were expected to be borne with more than Spartan fortitude, came to be considered less as inflictions of disgrace than as trials of obstinate endurance. To make his boys hardy, and to give them early sailor-habits, seemed to be his only aim; to this every thing was subordinate. Moral obliquities, indeed, were sure of receiving their full recompense, for no occasion of laying on the lash was ever let slip; but the effects expected to be produced from it were something very different from contrition or mortification. There was in William Wales a perpetual fund of humour, a constant glee about him, which, heightened by an inveterate provincialism of North-country dialect, absolutely took away the sting from his severities. His punishments were a game at patience, in which the master was not always worst contented when he found himself at times overcome by his pupil. What success this discipline had, or how the effects of it operated upon the after-lives of these king's boys, I cannot say: but I am sure that, for the time, they were absolute nuisances to the rest of the school. Hardy, brutal, and often wicked, they were the most graceless lump in the whole mass; older and bigger than the other boys, (for, by the system of their education they were kept longer at school by two or three years than any of the rest, except the Grecians,) they were a constant terror to the younger part of the school; and some who may read this, I doubt not, will remember the consternation into which the juvenile fry of us were thrown, when the cry was raised in the cloisters, that *the First Order was coming*—for so they termed the first form or class of those boys. Still these sea-boys answered some good purposes in the school. They were the military class among the boys, foremost in athletic exercises, who extended the fame of the prowess of the school far and near; and the apprentices in the vicinage, and sometimes the butchers' boys in the neighbouring market, had sad occasion to attest their valour.

The time would fail me if I were to attempt to enumerate all those circumstances, some pleasant, some attended with some pain, which, seen through the mist of distance, come sweetly softened to the memory. But I must crave leave to remember our transcending superiority in those in-

vigorating sports, leap-frog, and basting the bear; our delightful excursions in the summer holidays to the New River, near Newington, where, like otters, we would live the long day in the water, never caring for dressing ourselves when we had once stripped; our savoury meals afterwards, when we came home almost famished with staying out all day without our dinners; our visits at other times to the Tower, where, by antient privilege, we had free access to all the curiosities; our solemn processions through the City at Easter, with the Lord Mayor's largess of buns, wine, and a shilling, with the festive questions and civil pleasantries of the dispensing Aldermen, which were more to us than all the rest of the banquet; our stately suppings in public, where the well-lighted hall, and the confluence of well-dressed company who came to see us, made the whole look more like a concert or assembly, than a scene of a plain bread and cheese collation; the annual orations upon St. Matthew's day, in which the senior scholar, before he had done, seldom failed to reckon up, among those who had done honour to our school by being educated in it, the names of those accomplished critics and Greek scholars, Joshua Barnes and Jeremiah Markland (I marvel they left out Camden while they were about it). Let me have leave to remember our hymns and anthems, and well-toned organ; the doleful tune of the burial anthem chanted in the solemn cloisters, upon the seldom-occurring funeral of some schoolfellow; the festivities at Christmas, when the richest of us would club our stock to have a gaudy day, sitting round the fire, replenished to the height with logs, and the penniless, and he that could contribute nothing, partook in all the mirth, and in some of the substantialities of the feasting; the carol sung by night at that time of the year, which, when a young boy, I have so often lain awake to hear from seven (the hour of going to bed) till ten, when it was sung by the older boys and monitors, and have listened to it, in their rude chanting, till I have been transported in fancy to the fields of Bethlehem, and the song which was sung at that season by angels' voices to the shepherds.

Nor would I willingly forget any of those things which administered to our vanity. The hem-stitched bands, and own-made shirts, which some of the most fashionable

among us wore ; the town-girdles, with buckles of silver, or shining stone ; the badges of the sea-boys ; the cots, or superior shoe-strings of the monitors ; the medals of the markers, (those who were appointed to hear the Bible read in the wards on Sunday morning and evening,) which bore on their obverse in silver, as certain parts of our garments carried in meaner metal, the countenance of our Founder, that godly and royal child, King Edward the Sixth, the flower of the Tudor name—the young flower that was untimely cropt as it began to fill our land with its early odours—the boy-patron of boys—the serious and holy child who walked with Cranmer and Ridley—fit associate, in those tender years, for the bishops and future martyrs of our Church, to receive, or (as occasion sometimes proved,) to give instruction.

> But, ah ! what means the silent tear ?
> Why, e'en mid joy, my bosom heave ?
> Ye long-lost scenes, enchantments dear !
> Lo ! now I linger o'er your grave.
>
> ——Fly, then, ye hours of rosy hue,
> And bear away the bloom of years !
> And quick succeed, ye sickly crew
> Of doubts and sorrows, pains and tears !
>
> Still will I ponder Fate's unalter'd plan,
> Nor, tracing back the child, forget that I am man.[a]

TABLE-TALK IN *THE EXAMINER*

I.—REYNOLDS AND LEONARDO DA VINCI

[Printed in *The Examiner*, June 6, 1813, signed ‡. First collected by J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

The Reynolds Gallery has, upon the whole, disappointed me. Some of the portraits are interesting. They are faces of characters whom we (middle-aged gentlemen) were born a little too late to remember, but about whom we have heard our fathers tell stories, till we almost fancy to have seen them. There is a charm in the portrait of a Rodney, or a Keppel, which even a picture of Nelson must want for me. I should turn away after a slight inspection from the

[a] Lines meditated in the cloisters of Christ's Hospital, in the ' Poetics ' of Mr. George Dyer.

best likeness that could be made of Mrs. Anne Clark; but Kitty Fisher is a considerable personage. Then the dresses of some of the women so exactly remind us of modes which we can just recall; of the forms under which the venerable relationships of aunt or mother first presented themselves to our young eyes; the aprons, the coifs, the lappets, the hoods. Mercy on us, what a load of head-ornaments seem to have conspired to bury a pretty face in the picture of Mrs. Long, *yet could not!* Beauty must have some 'charmed life' to have been able to surmount the conspiracy of fashion in those days to destroy it. The portraits which least pleased me were those of boys as infant Bacchuses, Jupiters, &c. But the Artist is not to be blamed for the disguise. No doubt the parents wished to see their children deified in their lifetime. It was but putting a thunderbolt (instead of a squib) into young master's hands, and a whey-faced chit was transformed into the infant Ruler of Olympus, him who was afterwards to shake heaven and earth with his black brow. Another good boy pleased his grandmama with saying his prayers so well, and the blameless dotage of the good old woman imagined in him an adequate representative of the infancy of the awful prophet Samuel. *But the great historical compositions, where the Artist was at liberty to paint from his own idea—the Beaufort and the Ugolino;*—why then, I must confess, pleading the liberty of Table-Talk for my presumption, that they have not left any very elevating impressions upon my mind. Pardon a ludicrous comparison. I know, Madam, you admire them both; but placed opposite to each other as they are at the Gallery, as if to set the one work in competition with the other, they did remind me of the famous contention for the prize of deformity, mentioned in the 173d number of the *Spectator*. The one stares and the other grins; but is there common dignity in their countenances? Does any thing of the history of their life gone by peep through the ruins of the mind in the face, like the unconquerable grandeur that surmounts the distortions of the Laocoon?—The figures which stand by the bed of Beaufort are indeed happy representations of the plain unmannered old Nobility of the English Historical Plays of Shakspeare; but for any thing else,—give me leave to recommend these Macaroons.

After leaving the Reynolds Gallery, where, upon the whole, I received a good deal of pleasure, not feeling that I had quite had my fill of paintings, I stumbled upon a picture in Piccadilly (No. 22, I think), which purports to be a portrait of Francis the First by Leonardo da Vinci. Heavens, what a difference! It is but a portrait as most of those I had been seeing ; but placed by them it would kill them, swallow them up as Moses's rod the other rods. Where did those old painters get their models ? I see no such figures, not in my dreams, as this Francis, in the character, or rather with the attributes of John the Baptist. A more than mortal majesty in the brow and upon the eyelid —an arm muscular, beautifully formed—the long graceful massy fingers compressing, yet so as not to hurt, a lamb more lovely, more sweetly shrinking, that we can conceive that milk-white one which followed Una. The picture altogether looking as if it were eternal—combining the truth of flesh with a promise of permanence like marble.

Leonardo, from the one or two specimens we have of him in England, must have been a stupendous genius. I scarce can think he has had his full fame—he who could paint that wonderful personification of the Logos or third person of the Trinity, grasping a globe, late in the possession of Mr. Troward, of Pall-Mall, where the hand was by the boldest licence twice as big as the truth of drawing warranted, yet the effect to every one that saw it, by some magic of genius, was confessed to be not *monstrous*, but *miraculous* and *silencing*. It could not be gainsaid.

II.—[MODERN ACTING AND STAGE MANNERS]

[Printed in *The Examiner*, July 18, 1813, signed ‡. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, Vol. I., 1903.]

The difference of the present race of actors from those I remember, seems to be, that less study is found necessary for the profession than was formerly judged to be requisite. Parsons and Dodd must have *thought* a good deal before they could have matured such exhibitions as their *Foresight* and *Aguecheek*. We do not want capable actors, but their end is answered with less pains. The way is to get a kind

of familiarity with the audience, to strike up a kind of personal friendship, to be 'hail fellow, well met', with them: those excellent comedians, Bannister and Dowton, who had least need of these arts, have not disdained to use them. You see a reciprocity of greeting and goodwill between them and the house at first entrance. It is amazing how much carelessness of acting slips in by this intercourse. After all, it is a good-natured fault, and a great many kindly feelings are generated in the galleries by this process, feelings which are better than criticism.—Russell's *Jerry Sneak* appears to me to be a piece of the richest colouring we have on the present stage in the comic line, if, indeed, it be entirely comic, for its effect on me, in some passages, is even pathetic. The innocent, good-natured tones with which *Sneak* makes his ineffectual appeals to the sympathy of the hard-hearted and contemptuous betrayer of his honour, the *Major;* the slight dash of idiotism which the Actor contrives to throw into the part, (which Foote, I will venture to say, never dreamt of), but yet which has the happiest effect in turning what would be *contempt*, an ill-natured and heart-injuring passion, into *pity* and *compassion;* are some of the nicest effects of observation, and tend to unvulgarize the part, if I may be allowed the expression. —For a piece of pure drollery, Liston's *Lord Grizzle* has no competitor. Comedy it is not, nor farce. It is neither nature, nor exaggerated nature. It is a creation of the actor's own. *Grizzle* seems a being of another world, such an one as *Nicolaus Klimius* might have seen at the fantastic courts of his *World under the Ground*. It is an abstract idea of court qualities,—an apotheosis of apathy. Ben Jonson's abstractions of courtiers in his *Cynthia's Revels* and *Every Man out of his Humour*, what a treat it would be to see them on the stage done in the same manner!—What I most despair of is, seeing again a succession of such actresses as Mrs. Mattocks, Miss Pope, and Mrs. Jordan. This coquetting between the performer and the public is carried to a shocking excess by some of the Ladies who play the first characters in what is called genteel comedy. Instead of playing their pretty airs upon their lover on the stage, as Mrs. Abingdon or Mrs. Cibber were content to do, or Mrs. Oldfield before them, their whole artillery of charms

is now directed to ensnare—whom ?—why, the whole audience—a thousand gentlemen, perhaps—for this many-headed beast they furl and unfurl their fan, and teach their lips to curl in smiles, and their bosoms exhibit such pretty instructive heavings. These personal applications, which used to be a sort of sauce-piquant for the pert epilogue, now give the standing relish to the whole play. I am afraid an actress who should omit them would not find her account in it. I am sure that the very absence of this fault in Miss Kelly, and her judicious attention to her part, with little or no reference to the spectators, is one cause why her varied excellencies, though they are beginning to be perceived, have yet found their way more slowly to the approbation of the public, than they have deserved. Two or three more such instances would reform the stage, and drive off the Glovers, the Johnstons, and the St. Legers. O ! when shall we see a female part acted in the quiet, unappealing manner of Miss Pope's *Miss Candour ?* When shall we get rid of the Dalilahs of the stage ? ‡

III.—BOOKS WITH ONE IDEA IN THEM

[Printed, over the signature ‡, in *The Examiner*, July 18, 1813 ; again, under the above title, in *The Indicator*, Dec. 13, 1820. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., Vol. I, 1903.]

Dull poetry is to me far more oppressive than the same quantity of dullness in prose. The act of attending to the metre is perfectly painful where there is nothing to repay one in the thought. Of heavy prose I can swallow a good dose. I do not know that I was ever deterred from reading through a book which I had begun, supposing the subject to be to my mind, except Patrick's Pilgrim. The freezing, appalling, petrifying dullness of that book is quite astounding. Yet is there one lively image in the preface, which an author in the present day might comfort himself by applying to his reviewers : ' If the writer of these pages shall chance to meet with any that shall only study to cavil and pick a quarrel with him, he is prepared beforehand to take no notice of it, nor to be more troubled at their incivility, than a devout hermit is at the ugly faces which the creatures who

something resemble men make at him as he is walking through the deserts.' An amusing catalogue might be made of books which contain but one good passage. They would be a sort of single-speech Hamiltons; if Balaam's palfry might not be thought a more apt counterpart to them. Killigrew's play of the Parson's Wedding, which in length of massy dullness exceeds many books, is remarkable for one little spark of liveliness. The languishing fine lady of the piece exclaims most characteristically, upon coming in tired with walking: 'I am glad I am come home, for I am e'en as weary with this walking. For God's sake, whereabouts does the pleasure of walking lie? I swear I have often sought it till I was weary, and yet I could ne'er find it.'—Charron on Wisdom, a cumbrous piece of formality, which Pope's eulogium lately betrayed me into the perusal of, has one splendid passage; page 138, (I think) English translation. It contrasts the open honours with which we invest the sword, as the means of putting man out of the world, with the concealing and retiring circumstances that accompany his introduction into it. It is a piece of gorgeous and happy eloquence.—What could Pope mean by that line,—'sage Montaigne, or more sage Charron?' Montaigne is an immense treasure-house of observation, anticipating all the discoveries of succeeding essayists. You cannot dip in him without being struck with the aphorism, that there is nothing new under the sun. All the writers on common life since him have done nothing but echo him. You cannot open him without detecting a Spectator, or starting a Rambler; besides that his own character pervades the whole, and binds it sweetly together. Charron is a mere piece of formality, scholastic dry bones, without sinew or living flesh.

IV.—A SYLVAN SURPRISE

[Printed, over the signature ‡, in *The Examiner*, Sept. 12, 1813; again, under the above title, in *The Indicator*, Jan. 3, 1821. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., Vol. I, 1903.]

Time and place give every thing its propriety. Strolling one day in the Twickenham meadows, I was struck with the appearance of something dusky upon the grass, which

my eye could not immediately reduce into a shape. Going nearer, I discovered the cause of the phenomenon. In the midst of the most rural scene in the world, the day glorious over head, the wave of Father Thames rippling deliciously by him, lay outstretched at his ease upon Nature's verdant carpet—a chimney-sweeper—

> ——a spot like which
> Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
> Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw.

There is no reason in nature why a chimney-sweeper should not indulge a taste for rural objects, but somehow the ideas were discordant. It struck upon me like an inartificial discord in music. It was a combination of *urbs in rure*, which my experience had not prepared me to anticipate. ‡

V.—[FLYING WORDS]

[Printed in *The Examiner*, Sept. 12, 1813; signed ‡. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., Vol. I, 1903.]

It should seem almost impossible for a person to have arrived at the age of manhood, and never once to have heard or suspected that there have been people born before our times. Yet this fact I am obliged to conclude from the fragment of a conversation which I overheard between two of the lower order of Irish, who passed me in Holborn the other day. One of them, it seems, had appealed in defence of his argument to the opinions or practice of their forefathers, for I heard the other exclaim 'the ancients! who were they?'—'What!' retorted his companion, with an air of insolent superiority, 'did you never hear of the ancients? did you never read of them?' They had got too far for me to hear the conclusion of their extraordinary discourse; but I have often thought that it would be amusing to register the sentences, and scraps of sentences, which one catches up in a day's walk about the town; I mean in the way of fair and honest listening, without way-laying one's neighbour for more than he would be willing to communicate. From these flying words, with the help of a little imagination, one might often piece out a long conversation foregone. ‡

VI.—[A TOWN RESIDENCE]

[Printed in *The Examiner*, Sept. 12, 1813; signed ‡. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., Vol. I, 1903.]

Where would a man of taste chuse his town residence, setting convenience out of the question? Palace-yard,—for its contiguity to the Abbey, the Courts of Justice, the Sittings of Parliament, Whitehall, the Parks, &c.,—I hold of all places in these two great cities of London and Westminster to be the most classical and eligible. Next in classicality, I should name the four Inns of Court: they breathe a learned and collegiate air; and of them chiefly,

> ———those bricky towers
> The which on Thames' broad aged back doth ride,
> Where now the studious Lawyers have their bowers;
> There whilom wont the Templar Knights to bide,
> Till they decay'd through pride—

as Spenser describes, evidently with a relish. I think he had Garden Court in his eye. The noble hall which stands there must have been built about that time. Next to the Inns of Court, Covent-Garden, for its *rus in urbe*, its wholesome scents of early fruits and vegetables, its tasteful church and arcades,—above all, the neighbouring theatres, cannot but be approved of. I do not know a fourth station comparable to or worthy to be named after these. To an antiquarian, every spot in London, or even Southwark, teems with historical associations, local interest. He could not chuse amiss. But to me, who have no such qualifying knowledge, the Surrey side of the water is peculiarly distasteful. It is impossible to connect any thing interesting with it. I never knew a man of taste to live, what they term, *over the bridge*. Observe, in this place I speak solely of *chosen* and *voluntary* residence.

‡

VII.—GRAY'S *BARD*

[Printed, over the signature ‡, in *The Examiner*, Sept. 12, 1813; again, under the above title, in *The Indicator*, Dec. 13, 1820. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., Vol. I, 1903.]

The beard of Gray's Bard, 'streaming like a meteor,'

had always struck me as an injudicious imitation of the Satanic ensign in the *Paradise Lost,* which

> ——full high advanced,
> Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind:

till the other day I met with a passage in Heywood's old play, *The Four Prentices of London,* which it is difficult to imagine not to be the origin of the similitude in both poets. The line in Italics Gray has almost verbatim adopted—

> In Sion towers hangs his victorious flag,
> Blowing defiance this way; and it shows
> *Like a red meteor in the troubled air,*
> Or like a blazing comet that foretells
> The fall of princes.

All here is noble, and as it should be. The comparison enlarges the thing compared without stretching it upon a violent rack, till it bursts with ridiculous explosion. The application of such gorgeous imagery to an old man's beard is of a piece with the Bardolfian bombast: 'see you these meteors, these exhalations?' or the raptures of an Oriental lover, who should compare his mistress's nose to a watch-tower or a steeple. The presageful nature of the meteor, which makes so fine an adjunct of the simile in Heywood, Milton has judiciously omitted, as less proper to his purpose; but he seems not to have overlooked the beauty of it, by his introducing the superstition in a succeeding book—

> ————like a comet burn'd,
> That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
> In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
> Shakes pestilence and war.

‡

VIII.—AN AMERICAN WAR FOR HELEN

[Printed, over the signature ‡, in *The Examiner,* Sept. 26, 1813; again, under the above title, in *The Indicator,* Jan. 3, 1821. First collected in *The Complete Correspondence and Works of C. L.,* ed. W. C. Hazlitt, Moxon, 1868–1870.]

I have in my possession a curious volume of Latin verses, which I believe to be unique. It is entitled *Alex-*

andri Fultoni Scoti Epigrammatorum libri quinque. It purports to be printed at Perth, and bears date 1679. By the appellation which the author gives himself in the preface, *hypodidasculus*, I suppose him to have been an usher at some school. It is no uncommon thing now-a-days for persons concerned in academies to affect a literary reputation in the way of their trade. The 'master of a seminary for a limited number of pupils at Islington', lately put forth an edition of that scarce tract, the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* (to use his own words), with notes and headlines!—But to our author. These epigrams of Alexander Fulton, Scotchman, have little remarkable in them besides extreme dulness and insipidity; but there is one, which, by its being marshalled in the front of the volume, seems to have been the darling of its parent, and for its exquisite flatness, and the surprising stroke of anachronism with which it is pointed, deserves to be rescued from oblivion. It is addressed, like many of the others, to a fair one:—

Ad Mariulam suam Autor.

Moverunt bella olim Helenæ decor atque venustas
Europen inter frugiferamque Asiam.
Tam bona, quam tu, tam prudens, sin illa fuisset,
Ad lites issent Africa et America!

Which, in humble imitation of mine author's peculiar poverty of stile, I have ventured thus to render into English:—

The Author to his Moggy

For love's illustrious cause, and Helen's charms,
All Europe and all Asia rush'd to arms.
Had she with these thy polish'd sense combin'd,
All Afric and America had join'd!

The happy idea of an American war undertaken in the cause of beauty ought certainly to recommend the author's memory to the countrymen of Madison and Jefferson; and the bold anticipation of the discovery of that Continent in the time of the Trojan War is a flight beyond the Sibyll's books.

IX.—[DRYDEN AND COLLIER]

[Printed in *The Examiner*, Sept. 26, 1813; signed ‡. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., Vol. I, 1903.]

The different way in which the same story may be told by different persons was never more strikingly illustrated than by the manner in which the celebrated Jeremy Collier has described the effects of Timotheus's music upon Alexander, in the Second Part of his Essays. We all know how Dryden has treated the subject. Let us now hear his great contemporary and antagonist :—'*Timotheus, a Grecian*,' says Collier, 'was so great a *Master*, that he could make a Man storm and swagger like a Tempest. And then, by altering the *Notes* and the *Time*, he would take him down again, and sweeten his Humour in a trice. One Time, when *Alexander* was at Dinner, this Man play'd him a *Phrygian* Air : The Prince immediately rises, snatches up his Lance, and puts himself into a Posture of Fighting. And the retreat was no sooner sounded by the Change of the Harmony, but his Arms were grounded, and his Fire extinct; and he sat down as orderly as if he had come from one of *Aristotle's Lectures*. I warrant you *Demosthenes* would have been flourishing about such a Business a long Hour, and may be not have done it neither. But *Timotheus* had a nearer Cut to the Soul : He could neck a Passion at a Stroke, and lay it Asleep. *Pythagoras* once met with a Parcel of drunken Fellows, who were likely to be troublesome enough. He presently orders the *Musick* to play Grave, and chop into a *Dorian :* Upon this, they all threw away their *Garlands*, and were as sober and as shamefaced as one would wish.'—It is evident that Dryden, in his inspired Ode, and Collier in all this pudder of prose, meant the same thing. But what a work does the latter make with his 'necking a passion at his stroke', 'making a man storm and swagger like a tempest,' and then 'taking him down and sweetening his humour in a trice'. What in Dryden is 'Softly sweet in Lydian measures', Collier calls 'chopping into a Dorian'.—This Collier was the same who, in his Biographical Dictionary, says of Shakespeare, that 'though his genius generally was jocular, and inclining

to festivity, yet *he could when he pleased be as serious as any body*'. ‡

X.—PLAY-HOUSE MEMORANDA

[Printed, over the signature ‡, in *The Examiner*, Dec. 19, 1813; again, under the above title, in *The Indicator*, Dec. 13, 1820. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., Vol. I, 1903.]

I once sat in the Pit of Drury-lane Theatre next to a blind man, who, I afterwards learned, was a street musician, well known about London. The play was *Richard the Third*, and it was curious to observe the interest which he took in every successive scene, so far more lively than could be perceived in any of the company around him. At those pathetic interviews between the *Queen* and *Duchess of York*, after the murder of the children, his eyes (or rather the places where eyes should have been) gushed out tears in torrents, and he sat intranced in attention, while every one about him was tittering, partly at him, and partly at the grotesque figures and wretched action of the women, who had been selected by managerial taste to personate those royal mourners. Having no drawback of sight to impair his sensibilities, he simply attended to the scene, and received its unsophisticated impression. *So much the rather her celestial light shone inward.* I was pleased with an observation which he made, when I asked him how he liked Kemble, who played *Richard*. I should have thought (said he) that that man had been reading something out of a book, if I had not known that I was in a play-house.

I was once amused in a different way by a knot of country people who had come to see a play at that same Theatre. They seemed perfectly inattentive to all the best performers for the first act or two, though the piece was admirably played, but kept poring in the play-bill, and were evidently watching for the appearance of one, who was to be the source of supreme delight to them that night. At length the expected actor arrived, who happened to be in possession of a very insignificant part, not much above a [1]mule. I saw their faint attempt at raising a clap on his appearance, and their disappoint-

[1] *Query* mute (*E.V.L.*).

ment at not being seconded by the audience in general. I saw them try to admire and to find out something very wonderful in him, and wondering all the while at the moderate sensation he produced. I saw their pleasure and their interest subside at last into flat mortification, when the riddle was at once unfolded by my recollecting that this performer bore the same name with an actor, then in the acme of his celebrity, at Covent-Garden, but who lately finished his theatrical and mortal career on the other side the Atlantic. They had come to see Mr. C—, but had come to the wrong house.

Is it a stale remark to say, that I have constantly found the interest excited at a play-house to bear an exact inverse proportion to the price paid for admission? Formerly, when my sight and hearing were more perfect, and my purse a little less so, I was a frequenter of the upper gallery in the old Theatres. The eager attention, the breathless listening, the anxiety not to lose a word, the quick anticipation of the significance of the scene (every sense kept as it were upon a sharp look out), which are exhibited by the occupiers of those higher and now almost out-of-sight regions (who, going seldom to a play, cannot afford to lose any thing by inattention), suffer some little diminution, as you descend to the lower or two-shilling ranks; but still the joy is lively and unallayed, save that by some little *incursion* of *manners*, the expression of it is expected to abate somewhat of its natural liveliness. The oaken plaudits of the trunkmaker would *here* be considered as going a little beyond the line.—In the pit first begins that accursed critical faculty, which, making a man the judge of his own pleasures, too often constitutes him the executioner of his own and others'! You may see the *jealousy of being unduly pleased*, the *suspicion of being taken in to admire;* in short, the vile critical spirit, creeping and diffusing itself, and spreading from the wrinkled brows and cloudy eyes of the front row sages and newspaper reporters (its proper residence), till it infects and clouds over the thoughtless, vacant countenance of John Bull tradesmen, and clerks of counting-houses, who, but for that approximation, would have been contented to have grinned without rule, and to have been pleased without asking why.

The sitting next a critic is contagious. Still now and then a *genuine spectator* is to be found among them, a shopkeeper and his family, whose honest titillations of mirth, and generous chucklings of applause, cannot wait or be at leisure to take the cue from the sour judging faces about them. Haply they never dreamed that there were such animals in nature as critics or reviewers; even the idea of an author may be a speculation they never entered into; but they take the mirth they find as a pure effusion of the actor-folks, set there on purpose to make them fun. I love the unenquiring gratitude of such spectators. As for the Boxes, I never can understand what brings the people there. I see such frigid indifference, such unconcerned spectatorship, such impenetrability to pleasure or its contrary, such being *in the house* and yet not *of it*, certainly they come far nearer the nature of *the Gods*, upon the system of Lucretius at least, than those honest, hearty, well-pleased, unindifferent mortals above, who, from time immemorial, have had that name, upon no other ground than situation, assigned them.

Take the play-house altogether, there is a less sum of enjoyment than used to be. Formerly you might see something like the effect of a novelty upon a citizen, his wife and daughters, in the Pit; their curiosity upon every new face that entered upon the stage. The talk of how they got in at the door, and how they were crowded upon some former occasion, made a topic till the curtain drew up. People go too often now-a-days to make their ingress or egress of consequence. Children of seven years of age will talk as familiarly of the performers, aye and as knowingly (according to the received opinion) as grown persons; more than the grown persons in my time. Oh when shall I forget first seeing a play, at the age of five or six? It was *Artaxerxes*. Who played, or who sang in it, I know not. Such low ideas as actors' names, or actors' merits, never entered my head. Thy mystery of delight was not cut open and dissipated for me by those who took me there. It was *Artaxerxes* and *Arbaces* and *Mandane* that I saw, not Mr. Beard, or Mr. Leoni, or Mrs. Kennedy. It was all enchantment and a dream. No such pleasure has since visited me but in dreams. I was in Persia for

the time, and the burning idol of their devotion in the Temple almost converted me into a worshipper. I was awe-struck, and believed those significations to be something more than elemental fires. I was, with Uriel, in the body of the sun.—What should I have gained by knowing (as I should have done, had I been born thirty years later) that that solar representation was a mere painted scene, that had neither fire nor light in itself, and that the royal phantoms, which passed in review before me, were but such common mortals as I could see every day out of my father's window? We crush the faculty of delight and wonder in children, by explaining every thing. We take them to the source of the Nile, and shew them the scanty runnings, instead of letting the beginnings of that sevenfold stream remain in impenetrable darkness, a mysterious question of wonderment and delight to ages.

THE EXCURSION; A POEM

By WILLIAM WORDSWORTH. London. 4to. pp. 447

[Printed in *The Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1814. First collected in *The Complete Works in Prose and Verse*, ed. R. H. Shepherd, 1874.]

The volume before us, as we learn from the Preface, is 'a detached portion of an unfinished poem, containing views of man, nature, and society'; to be called the Recluse, as having for its principal subject the 'sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement'; and to be preceded by a 'record in verse of the origin and progress of the author's own powers, with reference to the fitness which they may be supposed to have conferred for the task'. To the completion of this plan we look forward with a confidence which the execution of the finished part is well calculated to inspire.—Meanwhile, in what is before us there is ample matter for entertainment: for the 'Excursion' is not a branch (as might have been suspected) prematurely plucked from the parent tree to gratify an overhasty appetite for applause; but is, in itself, a complete and legitimate production.

It opens with the meeting of the poet with an aged man

whom he had known from his school days ; in plain words, a Scottish pedlar ; a man who, though of low origin, had received good learning and impressions of the strictest piety from his stepfather, a minister and village schoolmaster. Among the hills of Athol, the child is described to have become familiar with the appearances of nature in his occupation as a feeder of sheep ; and from her silent influences to have derived a character, meditative, tender, and poetical. With an imagination and feelings thus nourished—his intellect not unaided by books, but those, few, and chiefly of a religious cast—the necessity of seeking a maintenance in riper years, had induced him to make choice of a profession, the *appellation* for which has been gradually declining into contempt, but which formerly designated a class of men, who, journeying in country places, when roads presented less facilities for travelling, and the intercourse between towns and villages was unfrequent and hazardous, became a sort of link of neighbourhood to distant habitations ; resembling, in some small measure, in the effects of their periodical returns, the caravan which Thomson so feelingly describes as blessing the cheerless Siberian in its annual visitation, with ' news of human kind '.

In the solitude incident to this rambling life, power had been given him to keep alive that devotedness to nature which he had imbibed in his childhood, together with the opportunity of gaining such notices of persons and things from his intercourse with society, as qualified him to become a ' teacher of moral wisdom '. With this man, then, in a hale old age, released from the burthen of his occupation, yet retaining much of its active habits, the poet meets, and is by him introduced to a second character —a sceptic—one who had been partially roused from an overwhelming desolation, brought upon him by the loss of wife and children, by the powerful incitement of hope which the French Revolution in its commencement put forth, but who, disgusted with the failure of all its promises, had fallen back into a laxity of faith and conduct which induced at length a total despondence as to the dignity and final destination of his species. In the language of the poet, he

——broke faith with those whom he had laid
In earth's dark chambers.

Yet he describes himself as subject to compunctious visitations from that silent quarter.

———Feebly must They have felt,
Who, in old time, attired with snakes and whips
The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards
Were turned on me—the face of her I loved;
The Wife and Mother; pitifully fixing
Tender reproaches, insupportable!—p. 133.

The conversations with this person, in which the Wanderer asserts the consolatory side of the question against the darker views of human life maintained by his friend, and finally calls to his assistance the experience of a village priest, the third, or rather fourth interlocutor, (for the poet himself is one,) form the groundwork of the 'Excursion'.

It will be seen by this sketch that the poem is of a didactic nature, and not a fable or story; yet it is not wanting in stories of the most interesting kind,—such as the lovers of Cowper and Goldsmith will recognise as something familiar and congenial to them. We might instance the Ruined Cottage, and the Solitary's own story, in the first half of the work; and the second half, as being almost a continued cluster of narration. But the prevailing charm of the poem is, perhaps, that, conversational as it is in its plan, the dialogue throughout is carried on in the very heart of the most romantic scenery which the poet's native hills could supply; and which, by the perpetual references made to it either in the way of illustration or for variety and pleasurable description's sake, is brought before us as we read. We breathe in the fresh air, as we do while reading Walton's Complete Angler; only the country about us is as much bolder than Walton's, as the thoughts and speculations, which form the matter of the poem, exceed the trifling pastime and low-pitched conversation of his humble fishermen. We give the description of the 'two huge peaks', which from some other vale peered into that in which the Solitary is entertaining the poet and companion. 'Those,' says their host,

> ————————if here you dwelt, would be
> Your prized Companions.—Many are the notes
> Which in his tuneful course the wind draws forth
> From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing shores;
> And well those lofty Brethren bear their part
> In the wild concert—chiefly when the storm
> Rides high; then all the upper air they fill
> With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow,
> Like smoke, along the level of the blast
> In mighty current; theirs, too, is the song
> Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails;
> And in the grim and breathless hour of noon,
> Methinks that I have heard them echo back
> The thunder's greeting:—nor have Nature's laws
> Left them ungifted with a power to yield
> Music of finer frame; a harmony,
> So do I call it, though it be the hand
> Of silence, though there be no voice;—the clouds,
> The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,
> Motions of moonlight, all come thither—touch,
> And have an answer—thither come, and shape
> A language not unwelcome to sick hearts
> And idle spirits:—there the sun himself
> At the calm close of summer's longest day
> Rests his substantial Orb;—between those heights,
> And on the top of either pinnacle,
> More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault,
> Sparkle the Stars as of their station proud.
> Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man
> Than the mute agent stirring there:—alone
> Here do I sit and watch.—p. 84.

To a mind constituted like that of Mr. Wordsworth, the stream, the torrent, and the stirring leaf—seem not merely to suggest associations of deity, but to be a kind of speaking communication with it. He walks through every forest, as through some Dodona; and every bird that flits among the leaves, like that miraculous one [a] in Tasso, but in language more intelligent, reveals to him far higher love-lays. In his poetry nothing in Nature is dead. Motion is synonymous with life. 'Beside yon spring,' says the

> With partie coloured plumes and purple bill,
> A woondrous bird among the rest there flew,
> That in plaine speech sung love laies loud and shrill,
> Her leden was like humaine language trew,
> So much she talkt, and with such wit and skill,
> That strange it seemed how much good she knew.
> *Fairefax's Translation.*

Wanderer, speaking of a deserted well, from which, in former times, a poor woman, who died heart-broken, had been used to dispense refreshment to the thirsty traveller,

> ————————beside yon Spring I stood,
> And eyed its waters till we seem'd to feel
> One sadness, they and I. For them a bond
> Of brotherhood is broken: time has been
> When, every day, the touch of human hand
> Dislodged the natural sleep that binds them up
> In mortal stillness;—p. 27.

To such a mind, we say—call it strength or weakness—if weakness, assuredly a fortunate one—the visible and audible things of creation present, not dim symbols, or curious emblems, which they have done at all times to those who have been gifted with the poetical faculty; but revelations and quick insights into the life within us, the pledge of immortality :—

> ————————the whispering Air
> Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,
> And blind recesses of the caverned rocks;
> The little Rills, and Waters numberless,
> Inaudible by daylight.

'I have seen,' the poet says, and the illustration is an happy one :

> ————————I have seen
> A curious Child applying to his ear
> The convolutions of a smooth-lipp'd Shell;
> To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
> Listened intensely, and his countenance soon
> Brightened with joy; for murmurings from within
> Were heard,—sonorous cadences! whereby,
> To his belief, the Monitor expressed
> Mysterious union with its native Sea.
> Even such a Shell the Universe itself
> Is to the ear of Faith; and doth impart
> Authentic tidings of invisible things;
> Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;
> And central peace subsisting at the heart
> Of endless agitation.—p. 191.

Sometimes this harmony is imaged to us by an echo; and in one instance, it is with such transcendant beauty set forth by a shadow and its corresponding substance,

that it would be a sin to cheat our readers at once of so happy an illustration of the poet's system, and so fair a proof of his descriptive powers.

> Thus having reached a bridge, that overarched
> The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed
> In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw
> A two-fold Image; on a grassy bank
> A snow-white Ram, and in the crystal flood
> Another and the same! Most beautiful,
> On the green turf, with his imperial front
> Shaggy and bold, and wreathed horns superb,
> The breathing Creature stood; as beautiful,
> Beneath him, showed his shadowy Counterpart.
> Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky.
> And each seemed centre of his own fair world:
> Antipodes unconscious of each other,
> Yet, in partition, with their several spheres,
> Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight!—p. 407.

Combinations, it is confessed, 'like those reflected in that quiet pool,' cannot be lasting: it is enough for the purpose of the poet, if they are felt.—They are at least his system; and his readers, if they reject them for their creed, may receive them merely as poetry. In him, *faith*, in friendly alliance and conjunction with the religion of his country, appears to have grown up, fostered by meditation and lonely communions with Nature—an internal principle of lofty consciousness, which stamps upon his opinions and sentiments (we were almost going to say) the character of an expanded and generous Quakerism.

From such a creed we should expect unusual results; and, when applied to the purposes of consolation, more touching considerations than from the mouth of common teachers. The finest speculation of this sort perhaps in the poem before us, is the notion of the thoughts which may sustain the spirit, while they crush the frame of the sufferer, who from loss of objects of love by death, is commonly supposed to pine away under a broken heart.

> ———If there be whose tender frames have drooped
> Even to the dust; apparently, through weight
> Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power
> An agonizing spirit to transmute,
> Infer not hence a hope from those withheld
> When wanted most; a confidence impaired

So pitiably, that, having ceased to see
With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love
Of what is lost, and perish through regret.
Oh! no, full oft the *innocent Sufferer sees*
Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs
To realize the Vision with intense
And over-constant yearning—there—there lies
The excess, by which the balance is destroyed.
Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
Though inconceivably endowed, too dim
For any passion of the soul that leads
To extacy; and, all the crooked paths
Of time and change disdaining, takes its course
Along the line of limitless desires.—p. 148.

With the same modifying and incorporating power, he tells us,—

Within the soul a Faculty abides
That with interpositions, which would hide
And darken, so can deal, that they become
Contingencies of pomp; and serve to exalt
Her native brightness. As the ample Moon,
In the deep stillness of a summer even
Rising behind a thick and lofty Grove,
Burns like an unconsuming fire of light,
In the green trees; and, kindling on all sides
Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil
Into a substance glorious as her own,
Yea with her own incorporated, by power
Capacious and serene. Like power abides
In Man's celestial Spirit; Virtue thus
Sets forth and magnifies herself; thus feeds
A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,
From the incumbrances of mortal life,
From error, disappointment,—nay from guilt;
And sometimes, so relenting Justice wills,
From palpable oppressions of Despair.—p. 188.

This is high poetry; though (as we have ventured to lay the basis of the author's sentiments in a sort of liberal Quakerism) from some parts of it, others may, with more plausibility, object to the appearance of a kind of Natural Methodism: we could have wished therefore that the tale of Margaret had been postponed, till the reader had been strengthened by some previous acquaintance with the author's theory, and not placed in the front of the poem, with a kind of ominous aspect, beautifully tender as it is.

It is a tale of a cottage, and its female tenant, gradually decaying together, while she expected the return of one whom poverty and not unkindness had driven from her arms. We trust ourselves only with the conclusion—

> Nine tedious years;
> From their first separation, nine long years,
> She lingered in unquiet widowhood,
> A Wife and Widow. I have heard, my Friend,
> That in yon arbour oftentimes she sate
> Alone, through half the vacant Sabbath-day;
> And, if a dog passed by, she still would quit
> The shade, and look abroad. On this old Bench
> For hours she sate; and evermore her eye
> Was busy in the distance, shaping things
> That made her heart beat quick. You see that path;
> There, to and fro, she paced through many a day
> Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp
> That girt her waist, spinning the long-drawn thread
> With backward steps. Yet ever as there pass'd
> A man whose garments shew'd the Soldier's [a] red,
> The little child who sate to turn the wheel,
> Ceas'd from his task; and she with faultering voice
> Made many a fond enquiry; and when they,
> Whose presence gave no comfort, were gone by,
> Her heart was still more sad. And by yon gate,
> That bars the Traveller's road, she often stood,
> And, when a stranger Horseman came, the latch
> Would lift, and in his face look wistfully;
> Most happy, if, from aught discovered there
> Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat
> The same sad question. Meanwhile her poor Hut
> Sank to decay: for he was gone—whose hand,
> At the first nipping of October frost,
> Closed up each chink, and with fresh bands of straw
> Checquered the green-grown thatch. And so she lived
> Through the long winter, reckless and alone;
> Until her house by frost, and thaw, and rain,
> Was sapped; and while she slept the nightly damps
> Did chill her breast; and in the stormy day
> Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the wind;
> Even at the side of her own fire. Yet still
> She loved this wretched spot, nor would for worlds
> Have parted hence: and still that length of road,
> And this rude bench, one torturing hope endeared,
> Fast rooted at her heart: and here, my Friend,
> In sickness she remained; and here she died,
> Last human Tenant of these ruined Walls.—p. 44.

[a] Her husband had enlisted for a soldier.

The fourth book, entitled ' Despondency Corrected ', we consider as the most valuable portion of the poem. For moral grandeur ; for wide scope of thought and a long train of lofty imagery ; for tender personal appeals ; and a *versification* which we feel we ought to notice, but feel it also so involved in the poetry, that we can hardly mention it as a distinct excellence ; it stands without competition among our didactic and descriptive verse. The general tendency of the argument (which we might almost affirm to be the leading moral of the poem) is to abate the pride of the calculating *understanding*, and to reinstate the *imagination* and the *affections* in those seats from which modern philosophy has laboured but too successfully to expel them.

' Life's autumn past,' says the grey-haired Wanderer,

> ———I stand on Winter's verge,
> And daily lose what I desire to keep:
> Yet rather would I instantly decline
> To the traditionary sympathies
> Of a most rustic ignorance, and take
> A fearful apprehension from the owl
> Or death-watch,—and as readily rejoice,
> If two auspicious magpies crossed my way;
> This rather would I do than see and hear
> The repetitions wearisome of sense,
> Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no place; —p. 168.

In the same spirit, those illusions of the imaginative faculty to which the peasantry in solitary districts are peculiarly subject, are represented as the kindly ministers of *conscience :*

> ———with whose service charged
> They come and go, appear and disappear;
> Diverting evil purposes, remorse
> Awakening, chastening an intemperate grief,
> Or pride of heart abating.

Reverting to more distant ages of the world, the operation of that same faculty in producing the several fictions of Chaldean, Persian, and Grecian idolatry, is described with such seductive power, that the Solitary, in good earnest, seems alarmed at the tendency of his own argument.—Notwithstanding his fears, however, there is one thought so uncommonly fine, relative to the spirituality which lay hid beneath the gross material forms of Greek worship, in metal

or stone, that we cannot resist the allurement of transcribing it—

> ———triumphant o'er this pompous show
> Of Art, this palpable array of Sense,
> On every side encountered; in despite
> Of the gross fictions, chaunted in the streets
> By wandering Rhapsodists; and in contempt
> Of doubt and bold denials hourly urged
> Amid the wrangling Schools—a SPIRIT hung,
> Beautiful Region! o'er thy Towns and Farms,
> Statues and Temples, and memorial Tombs;
> And emanations were perceived; and acts
> Of immortality, in Nature's course,
> Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt
> As bonds, on grave Philosopher imposed
> And armed Warrior; and in every grove
> A gay or pensive tenderness prevailed,
> When piety more awful had relaxed.
> 'Take, running River, take these Locks of mine'—
> Thus would the Votary say—'this severed hair,
> My Vow fulfilling, do I here present,
> Thankful for my beloved Child's return.
> Thy banks, Cephissus, he again hath trod,
> Thy murmurs heard; and drunk the chrystal lymph
> With which thou dost refresh the thirsty lip,
> And moisten all day long these flowery fields.'
> And doubtless, sometimes, when the hair was shed
> Upon the flowing stream, a thought arose
> Of Life continuous, Being unimpaired;
> That hath been, is, and where it was and is
> There shall be,—seen, and heard, and felt, and known,
> And recognized,—existence unexposed
> To the blind walk of mortal accident;
> From diminution safe and weakening age;
> While Man grows old, and dwindles, and decays;
> And countless generations of Mankind
> Depart; and leave no vestige where they trod.—p. 173.

In discourse like this the first day passes away. The second (for this almost dramatic poem takes up the action of two summer days) is varied by the introduction of the village priest; to whom the Wanderer resigns the office of chief speaker, which had been yielded to his age and experience on the first. The conference is begun at the gate of the church-yard; and after some natural speculations concerning death and immortality—and the custom of funereal and sepulchral observances, as deduced from a feeling of immortality—certain doubts are proposed

respecting the quantity of moral worth existing in the world, and in that mountainous district in particular. In the resolution of these doubts, the priest enters upon a most affecting and singular strain of narration, derived from the graves around him. Pointing to hillock after hillock, he gives short histories of their tenants, disclosing their humble virtues, and touching with tender hand upon their frailties.

Nothing can be conceived finer than the manner of introducing these tales. With heaven above his head, and the mouldering turf at his feet—standing betwixt life and death—he seems to maintain that spiritual relation which he bore to his living flock, in its undiminished strength, even with their ashes; and to be in his proper cure, or diocese, among the dead.

We might extract powerful instances of pathos from these tales—the story of Ellen in particular—but their force is in combination, and in the circumstances under which they are introduced. The traditionary anecdote of the Jacobite and Hanoverian, as less liable to suffer by transplanting, and as affording an instance of that finer species of humour, that thoughtful playfulness in which the author more nearly perhaps than in any other quality resembles Cowper, we shall lay (at least a part of it) before our readers. It is the story of a whig who, having wasted a large estate in election contests, retired 'beneath a borrowed name' to a small town among these northern mountains, where a Caledonian laird, a follower of the house of Stuart, who had fled his country after the overthrow at Culloden, returning with the return of lenient times, had also fixed his residence.

> ——————Here, then, they met,
> Two doughty Champions; flaming Jacobite
> And sullen Hanoverian! you might think
> That losses and vexations, less severe
> Than those which they had severally sustained,
> Would have inclined each to abate his zeal
> For his ungrateful cause; no,—I have heard
> My reverend Father tell that, mid the calm
> Of that small Town encountering thus, they filled,
> Daily, its Bowling-green with harmless strife;
> Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the Church;
> And vexed the Market-place. But in the breasts
> Of these Opponents gradually was wrought,

With little change of general sentiment,
Such change towards each other, that their days
By choice were spent in constant fellowship;
And if, at times, they fretted with the yoke,
Those very bickerings made them love it more.

A favourite boundary to their lengthened walks
This Church-yard was. And, whether they had come
Treading their path in sympathy and linked
In social converse, or by some short space
Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,
One Spirit seldom failed to extend its sway
Over both minds, when they awhile had marked
The visible quiet of this holy ground
And breathed its soothing air;——
[*Seven lines omitted*].

—There live who yet remember to have seen
Their courtly Figures,—seated on a stump
Of an old Yew, their favourite resting-place.
But, as the Remnant of the long-lived Tree
Was disappearing by a swift decay,
They, with joint care, determined to erect,
Upon its site, a Dial, which should stand
For public use; and also might survive
As their own private monument; for this
Was the particular spot, in which they wished
(And Heaven was pleased to accomplish their desire)
That, undivided, their Remains should lie.
So, where the mouldered Tree had stood, was raised
Yon Structure, framing, with the ascent of steps
That to the decorated Pillar lead,
A work of art, more sumptuous, as might seem,
Than suits this Place; yet built in no proud scorn
Of rustic homeliness; they only aimed
To ensure for it respectful guardianship.
Around the margin of the Plate, whereon
The Shadow falls, to note the stealthy hours,
Winds an inscriptive Legend,——At these words
Thither we turned; and gathered, as we read,
The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers couched.
'Time flies; it is his melancholy task
To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,
And re-produce the troubles he destroys.
But, while his blindness thus is occupied,
Discerning Mortal! do thou serve the will
Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace,
Which the World wants, shall be for Thee confirmed.'

—pp. 270–3.

The causes which have prevented the poetry of Mr. Wordsworth from attaining its full share of popularity are to be

found in the boldness and originality of his genius. The times are past when a poet could securely follow the direction of his own mind into whatever tracts it might lead. A writer, who would be popular, must timidly coast the shore of prescribed sentiment and sympathy. He must have just as much more of the imaginative faculty than his readers, as will serve to keep their apprehensions from stagnating, but not so much as to alarm their jealousy. He must not think or feel too deeply.

If he has had the fortune to be bred in the midst of the most magnificent objects of creation, he must not have given away his heart to them ; or if he have, he must conceal his love, or not carry his expressions of it beyond that point of rapture, which the occasional tourist thinks it not overstepping decorum to betray, or the limit which that gentlemanly spy upon Nature, the picturesque traveller, has vouchsafed to countenance. He must do this, or be content to be thought an enthusiast.

If from living among simple mountaineers, from a daily intercourse with them, not upon the footing of a patron, but in the character of an equal, he has detected, or imagines that he has detected, through the cloudy medium of their unlettered discourse, thoughts and apprehensions not vulgar ; traits of patience and constancy, love unwearied and heroic endurance, not unfit (as he may judge) to be made the subject of verse, he will be deemed a man of perverted genius by the philanthropist who, conceiving of the peasantry of his country only as objects of a pecuniary sympathy, starts at finding them elevated to a level of humanity with himself, having their own loves, enmities, cravings, aspirations, &c., as much beyond his faculty to believe, as his beneficence to supply.

If from a familiar observation of the ways of children, and much more from a retrospect of his own mind when a child, he has gathered more reverential notions of that state than fall to the lot of ordinary observers, and, escaping from the dissonant wranglings of men, has tuned his lyre, though but for occasional harmonies, to the milder utterance of that soft age,—his verses shall be censured as infantile by critics who confound poetry ' having children for its subject ' with poetry that is ' childish ', and who,

having themselves perhaps never been *children*, never having possessed the tenderness and docility of that age, know not what the soul of a child is—how apprehensive! how imaginative! how religious!

We have touched upon some of the causes which we conceive to have been unfriendly to the author's former poems. We think they do not apply in the same force to the one before us. There is in it more of uniform elevation, a wider scope of subject, less of manner, and it contains none of those starts and imperfect shapings which in some of this author's smaller pieces offended the weak, and gave scandal to the perverse. It must indeed be approached with seriousness. It has in it much of that quality which 'draws the devout, deterring the profane'. Those who hate the Paradise Lost will not love this poem. The steps of the great master are discernible in it; not in direct imitation or injurious parody, but in the following of the spirit, in free homage and generous subjection.

One objection it is impossible not to foresee. It will be asked, why put such eloquent discourse in the mouth of a pedlar? It might be answered that Mr. Wordsworth's plan required a character in humble life to be the organ of his philosophy. It was in harmony with the system and scenery of his poem. We read Piers Plowman's Creed, and the lowness of the teacher seems to add a simple dignity to the doctrine. Besides, the poet has bestowed an unusual share of education upon him. Is it too much to suppose that the author, at some early period of his life, may himself have known such a person, a man endowed with sentiments above his situation, another Burns; and that the dignified strains which he has attributed to the Wanderer may be no more than recollections of his conversation, heightened only by the amplification natural to poetry, or the lustre which imagination flings back upon the objects and companions of our youth? After all, if there should be found readers willing to admire the poem, who yet feel scandalized at a *name*, we would advise them, wherever it occurs, to substitute silently the word *Palmer*, or *Pilgrim*, or any less offensive designation, which shall connect the notion of sobriety in heart and manners with the experience and privileges which a wayfaring life confers.

ON THE MELANCHOLY OF TAILORS

[Printed in *The Champion*, December 4, 1814. Reprinted in *Works*, 1818. Text of 1818.]

Sedet, æternumque sedebit,
Infelix Theseus. VIRGIL.

THAT there is a professional melancholy, if I may so express myself, incident to the occupation of a tailor, is a fact which I think very few will venture to dispute. I may safely appeal to my readers, whether they ever knew one of that faculty that was not of a temperament, to say the least, far removed from mercurial or jovial.

Observe the suspicious gravity of their gait. The peacock is not more tender, from a consciousness of his peculiar infirmity, than a gentleman of this profession is of being known by the same infallible testimonies of his occupation. 'Walk, that I may know thee.'

Do you ever see him go whistling along the foot-path like a carman, or brush through a crowd like a baker, or go smiling to himself like a lover? Is he forward to thrust into mobs, or to make one at the ballad-singer's audiences? Does he not rather slink by assemblies and meetings of the people, as one that wisely declines popular observation?

How extremely rare is a noisy tailor! a mirthful and obstreperous tailor!

'At my nativity', says Sir Thomas Browne, 'my ascendant was the earthly sign of Scorpius; I was born in the planetary hour of Saturn, and I think I have a piece of that leaden planet in me.' One would think that he were anatomizing a tailor! save that to the latter's occupation, methinks, a woollen planet would seem more consonant, and that he should be born when the sun was in Aries.—He goes on. 'I am no way facetious, nor disposed for the mirth and galliardize of company.' How true a type of the whole trade! Eminently economical of his words, you shall seldom hear a jest come from one of them. He sometimes furnishes subject for a repartee, but rarely (I think) contributes one *ore proprio*.

Drink itself does not seem to elevate him, or at least to

call out of him any of the external indications of vanity. I cannot say that it never causes his pride to swell, but it never breaks out. I am even fearful that it may swell and rankle to an alarming degree inwardly. For pride is near of kin to melancholy ;—a hurtful obstruction from the ordinary outlets of vanity being shut. It is this stoppage which engenders proud humours. Therefore a tailor may be proud. I think he is never vain. The display of his gaudy patterns in that book of his which emulates the rainbow, never raises any inflations of that emotion in him, corresponding to what the wig-maker (for instance) evinces, when he expatiates on a curl or a bit of hair. He spreads them forth with a sullen incapacity for pleasure, a real or affected indifference to grandeur. Cloth of gold neither seems to elate, nor cloth of frize to depress him—according to the beautiful motto which formed the modest impresе of the shield worn by Charles Brandon at his marriage with the king's sister. Nay, I doubt whether he would discover any vainglorious complacence in his colours, though ' Iris ' herself ' dipt the woof '.

In further corroboration of this argument—who ever saw the wedding of a tailor announced in the newspapers, or the birth of his eldest son ?

When was a tailor known to give a dance, or to be himself a good dancer, or to perform exquisitely on the tight rope, or to shine in any such light and airy pastimes ? to sing, or play on the violin ?

Do they much care for public rejoicings, lightings up, ringing of bells, firing of cannons, &c.?

Valiant I know they can be ; but I appeal to those who were witnesses to the exploits of Eliot's famous troop, whether in their fiercest charges they betrayed any thing of that thoughtless oblivion of death with which a Frenchman jigs into battle, or whether they did not shew more of the melancholy valour of the Spaniard, upon whom they charged ; that deliberate courage which contemplation and sedentary habits breathe ?

Are they often great newsmongers ?—I have known some few among them arrive at the dignity of speculative politicians ; but that light and cheerful every-day interest in the affairs and goings-on of the world, which makes the

barber[a] such delightful company, I think is rarely observable in them.

This characteristic pensiveness in them being so notorious, I wonder none of those writers, who have expressly treated of melancholy, should have mentioned it. Burton, whose book is an excellent abstract of all the authors in that kind who preceded him, and who treats of every species of this malady, from the *hypochondriacal* or *windy* to the *heroical* or *love melancholy*, has strangely omitted it. Shakspeare himself has overlooked it. 'I have neither the scholar's melancholy (saith Jacques), which is emulation; nor the courtier's, which is proud; nor the soldier's, which is politick; nor the lover's, which is all these:'—and then, when you might expect him to have brought in, 'nor the tailor's, which is so and so'—he comes to an end of his enumeration, and falls to a defining of his own melancholy.

Milton likewise has omitted it, where he had so fair an opportunity of bringing it in, in his *Penseroso*.

But the partial omissions of historians proving nothing against the existence of any well-attested fact, I shall proceed and endeavour to ascertain the causes why this

[a] Having incidentally mentioned the barber, in a comparison of professional temperaments, I hope no other trade will take offence, or look upon it as an incivility done to them, if I say, that in courtesy, humanity, and all the conversational and social graces which 'gladden life,' I esteem no profession comparable to his. Indeed so great is the good-will which I bear to this useful and agreeable body of men, that, residing in one of the Inns of Court (where the best specimens of them are to be found, except perhaps at the universities) there are seven of them to whom I am personally known, and who never pass me without the compliment of the hat on either side. My truly polite and urbane friend, Mr. A——m, of Flower-de-luce-court, in Fleet-street, will forgive my mention of him in particular. I can truly say, that I never spent a quarter of an hour under his hands without deriving some profit from the agreeable discussions, which are always going on there. [But commend me above all to a shop opposite Middle Row, in Holborn, where, by the ingenious contrivance of the master taking in three partners, there is a physical impossibility of the conversation ever flagging, while 'the four' alternately toss it from one to the other, and at whatever time you drop in, you are sure of a discussion: an expedient which Mr. A——m would do well to think on, for with all the alacrity with which he and his excellent family are so dexterous to furnish their successive contributions, I have sometimes known the continuity of the dialogue broken into, and silence for a few seconds to intervene. 1814.]

pensive turn should be so predominant in people of this profession above all others.

And first, may it not be, that the custom of wearing apparel being derived to us from the fall, and one of the most mortifying products of that unhappy event, a certain *seriousness* (to say no more of it) may in the order of things have been intended to be impressed upon the minds of that race of men to whom in all ages the care of contriving the human apparel has been entrusted,—to keep up the memory of the first institution of clothes, and serve as a standing remonstrance against those vanities, which the absurd conversion of a memorial of our shame into an ornament of our persons was destined to produce? Correspondent in some sort to this, it may be remarked, that the tailor sitting over a cave or hollow place, in the cabbalistic language of his order, is said to have *certain melancholy regions* always open under his feet.—But waving further enquiry into final causes, where the best of us can only wander in the dark, let us try to discover the efficient causes of this melancholy.

I think, then, that they may be reduced to [1]two, omitting some subordinate ones, viz.,

The sedentary habits of the tailor.—
[2]Something peculiar in his diet.—

First, his *sedentary habits*.—In Dr. Norris's famous narrative of the frenzy of Mr. John Dennis, the patient, being questioned as to the occasion of the swelling in his legs, replies that it came 'by criticism'; to which the learned doctor seeming to demur, as to a distemper which he had never read of, Dennis (who appears not to have been mad upon all subjects) rejoins with some warmth, that it was no distemper, but a noble art! that he had sat fourteen hours a day at it: and that the other was a pretty doctor not to know that there was a communication between the brain and the legs.

When we consider that this sitting for fourteen hours continuously, which the critic probably practised only while he was writing his 'remarks', is no more than what the tailor, in the ordinary pursuance of his art, submits to daily (Sundays excepted) throughout the year, shall we wonder

[1] two] three 1814. [2] Something peculiar in his diet.—Mental perturbation from a sense of reproach, &c.—1814.—*See Editor's Notes.*

to find the brain affected, and in a manner over-clouded, from that indissoluble sympathy between the noble and less noble parts of the body, which Dennis hints at ? The unnatural and painful manner of his sitting must also greatly aggravate the evil, insomuch that I have sometimes ventured to liken tailors at their boards to so many envious Junos, *sitting crosslegged to hinder the birth of their own felicity*. The legs transversed thus ⋈ cross-wise, or decussated, was among the ancients the posture of malediction. The Turks, who practise it at this day, are noted to be a melancholy people.

Secondly, his *diet*.—To which purpose I find a most remarkable passage in Burton, in his chapter entitled ' Bad diet a cause of melancholy '. ' Amongst herbs to be eaten (he says) I find gourds, cucumbers, melons, disallowed; but especially CABBAGE. It causeth troublesome dreams, and sends up black vapours to the brain. Galen, *loc. affect.* lib. 3, cap. 6, of all herbs condemns CABBAGE. And Isaack, lib. 2, cap. 1, *animæ gravitatem facit*, it brings heaviness to the soul.' I could not omit so flattering a testimony from an author, who, having no theory of his own to serve, has so unconsciously contributed to the confirmation of mine. It is well known that this last-named vegetable has, from the earliest periods which we can discover, constituted almost the sole food of this extraordinary race of [1]people.

BURTON, *Junior*.

ON NEEDLE-WORK

By MARY LAMB

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To the Editor of The British Lady's Magazine

MR. EDITOR,—In early life I passed eleven years in the exercise of my needle for a livelihood. Will you allow me to address your readers, among whom might perhaps be found some of the kind patronesses of my former humble

[1] people. *For the continuation of the text of* 1814 *see Editor's Notes.*

labours, on a subject widely connected with female life—the state of needlework in this country.

To lighten the heavy burden which many ladies impose upon themselves is one object which I have in view: but I confess, my strongest motive is to excite attention towards the industrious sisterhood to which I once belonged.

From books I have been informed of the fact, upon which 'The British Lady's Magazine' chiefly founds its pretensions, namely, that women have of late been rapidly advancing in intellectual improvement. Much may have been gained in this way, indirectly, for that class of females for whom I wish to plead. Needlework and intellectual improvement are naturally in a state of warfare. But I am afraid the root of the evil has not as yet been struck at. Workwomen of every description were never in so much distress for want of employment.

Among the present circle of my acquaintance I am proud to rank many that may truly be called respectable; nor do the female part of them, in their mental attainments, at all disprove the prevailing opinion of that intellectual progression which you have taken as the basis of your work; yet I affirm that I know not a single family where there is not some essential drawback to its comfort which may be traced to needle-work *done at home*, as the phrase is for all needle-work performed in a family by some of its own members, and for which no remuneration in money is received or expected.

In money alone, did I say? I would appeal to all the fair votaries of voluntary housewifery, whether, in the matter of conscience, any one of them ever thought she had done as much needle-work as she ought to have done. Even fancy work, the fairest of the tribe!—how delightful the arrangement of her materials! the fixing upon her happiest pattern, how pleasing an anxiety! how cheerful the commencement of the labour she enjoins! But that lady must be a true lover of the art, and so industrious a pursuer of a predetermined purpose, that it were pity her energy should not have been directed to some wiser end, who can affirm she neither feels weariness during the execution of a fancy piece, nor takes more time than she had calculated for the performance.

Is it too bold an attempt to persuade your readers that it would prove an incalculable addition to general happiness, and the domestic comfort of both sexes, if needle-work were never practised but for a remuneration in money? As nearly, however, as this desirable thing can be effected, so much more nearly will women be upon an equality with men, as far as respects the mere enjoyment of life. As far as that goes, I believe it is every woman's opinion that the condition of men is far superior to her own.

'They can do what they like,' we say. Do not these words generally mean, they have time to seek out whatever amusements suit their tastes? We dare not tell them we have no time to do this; for, if they should ask in what manner we dispose of our time, we should blush to enter upon a detail of the minutiæ which compose the sum of a woman's daily employment. Nay, many a lady who allows not herself one quarter of an hour's positive leisure during her waking hours, considers her own husband as the most industrious of men, if he steadily pursue his occupation till the hour of dinner, and will be perpetually lamenting her own idleness.

Real business and *real leisure* make up the portions of men's time—two sources of happiness which we certainly partake of in a very inferior degree. To the execution of employment, in which the faculties of the body or mind are called into busy action, there must be a consoling importance attached, which feminine duties (that generic term for all our business) cannot aspire to.

In the most meritorious discharges of those duties, the highest praise we can aim at is to be accounted the helpmates of *man;* who, in return for all he does for us, expects, and justly expects, us to do all in our power to soften and sweeten life.

In how many ways is a good woman employed, in thought or action, through the day, in order that her *good man* may be enabled to feel his leisure hours *real substantial holyday*, and perfect respite from the cares of business! Not the least part to be done to accomplish this end is to fit herself to become a conversational companion; that is to say, she has to study and understand the subjects on which he loves to talk. This part of our duty, if strictly performed,

will be found by far our hardest part. The disadvantages we labour under from an education differing from a manly one make the hours in which we *sit and do nothing* in men's company too often any thing but a relaxation ; although, as to pleasure and instruction, time so passed may be esteemed more or less delightful.

To make a man's home so desirable a place as to preclude his having a wish to pass his leisure hours at any fireside in preference to his own, I should humbly take to be the sum and substance of woman's domestic ambition. I would appeal to our *British ladies*, who are generally allowed to be the most zealous and successful of all women in the pursuit of this object,—I would appeal to them who have been most successful in the performance of this laudable service, in behalf of father, son, husband, or brother, whether an anxious desire to perform this duty well is not attended with enough of *mental* exertion, at least, to incline them to the opinion that women may be more properly ranked among the contributors to, than the partakers of, the undisturbed relaxation of man.

If a family be so well ordered that the master is never called in to its direction, and yet he perceives comfort and economy well attended to, the mistress of that family (especially if children form a part of it) has, I apprehend, as large a share of womanly employment as ought to satisfy her own sense of duty ; even though the needle-book and thread-case were quite laid aside, and she cheerfully contributed her part to the slender gains of the corset-maker, the milliner, the dress-maker, the plain-worker, the embroidress, and all the numerous classifications of females supporting themselves by *needle-work*, that great staple commodity which is alone appropriated to the self-supporting part of our sex.

Much has been said and written on the subject of men engrossing to themselves every occupation and calling. After many years of observation and reflection, I am obliged to acquiesce in the notion that it cannot well be ordered otherwise.

If at the birth of girls it were possible to foresee in what cases it would be their fortune to pass a single life, we should soon find trades wrested from their present occupiers, and

transferred to the exclusive possession of our sex. The whole mechanical business of copying writings in the law department, for instance, might very soon be transferred with advantage to the poorer sort of women, who with very little teaching would soon beat their rivals of the other sex in facility and neatness. The parents of female children, who were known to be destined from their birth to maintain themselves through the whole course of their lives with like certainty as their sons are, would feel it a duty incumbent on themselves to strengthen the minds, and even the bodily constitutions, of their girls, so circumstanced, by an education which, without affronting the preconceived habits of society, might enable them to follow some occupation now considered above the capacity or too robust for the constitution of our sex. Plenty of resources would then lie open for single women to obtain an independent livelihood, when every parent would be upon the alert to encroach upon some employment, now engrossed by men, for such of their daughters as would then be exactly in the same predicament as their sons now are. Who, for instance, would lay by money to set up his sons in trade; give premiums, and in part maintain them through a long apprenticeship; or, which men of moderate incomes frequently do, strain every nerve in order to bring them up to a learned profession; if it were in a very high degree probable that, by the time they were twenty years of age, they would be taken from this trade or profession, and maintained during the remainder of their lives by the *person whom they should marry*. Yet this is precisely the situation in which every parent, whose income does not very much exceed the moderate, is placed with respect to his daughters.

Even where boys have gone through a laborious education, superinducing habits of steady attention, accompanied with the entire conviction that the business which they learn is to be the source of their future distinction, may it not be affirmed that the persevering industry required to accomplish this desirable end causes many a hard struggle in the minds of young men, even of the most hopeful disposition? What then must be the disadvantages under which a very young woman is placed who is required to learn a trade, from which she can never expect to reap any profit, but at

the expence of losing that place in society, to the possession of which she may reasonably look forward, inasmuch as it is by far the most *common lot*, namely, the condition of a *happy* English wife?

As I desire to offer nothing to the consideration of your readers but what, at least as far as my own observation goes, I consider as truths confirmed by experience, I will only say that, were I to follow the bent of my own speculative opinion, I should be inclined to persuade every female over whom I hoped to have any influence to contribute all the assistance in her power to those of her own sex who may need it, in the employments they at present occupy, rather than to force them into situations now filled wholly by men. With the mere exception of the profits which they have a right to derive from their needle, I would take nothing from the industry of man which he already possesses.

'A penny saved is a penny earned,' is a maxim not true, unless the penny be saved in the same time in which it might have been earned. I, who have known what it is to work for *money earned*, have since had much experience in working for *money saved ;* and I consider, from the closest calculation I can make, that a *penny saved* in that way bears about a true proportion to a *farthing earned*. I am no advocate for women, who do not depend on themselves for a subsistence, proposing to themselves to *earn money*. My reasons for thinking it not advisable are too numerous to state—reasons deduced from authentic facts, and strict observations on domestic life in its various shades of comfort. But, if the females of a family, *nominally* supported by the other sex, find it necessary to add something to the common stock, why not endeavour to do something by which they may produce money *in its true shape ?*

It would be an excellent plan, attended with very little trouble, to calculate every evening how much money has been saved by needle-work *done in the family*, and compare the result with the daily portion of the yearly income. Nor would it be amiss to make a memorandum of the time passed in this way, adding also a guess as to what share it has taken up in the thoughts and conversation. This would be an easy mode of forming a true notion, and getting at the exact worth of this species of *home* industry, and perhaps

might place it in a different light from any in which it has hitherto been the fashion to consider it.

Needle-work, taken up as an amusement, may not be altogether unamusing. We are all pretty good judges of what entertains ourselves, but it is not so easy to pronounce upon what may contribute to the entertainment of others. At all events, let us not confuse the motives of economy with those of simple pastime. If *saving* be no object, and long habit have rendered needle-work so delightful an avocation that we cannot think of relinquishing it, there are the good old contrivances in which our grand-dames were used to beguile and lose their time—knitting, knotting, netting, carpet working, and the like ingenious pursuits—those so-often-praised but tedious works, which are so long in the operation, that purchasing the labour has seldom been thought good economy, yet, by a certain fascination, they have been found to chain down the great to a self-imposed slavery, from which they considerately, or haughtily, excuse the needy. These may be esteemed lawful and lady-like amusements. But, if those works, more usually denominated useful, yield greater satisfaction, it might be a laudable scruple of conscience, and no bad test to herself of her own motive, if a lady, who had no absolute need, were to give the money so saved to poor needle-women belonging to those branches of employment from which she has borrowed these shares of pleasurable labour.

SEMPRONIA.

ON THE POETICAL WORKS OF GEORGE WITHER

[Composed in or about 1815. Printed in the *Works* of 1818.]

THE poems of G. Wither are distinguished by a hearty homeliness of manner, and a plain moral speaking. He seems to have passed his life in one continued act of an innocent self-pleasing. That which he calls his *Motto* is a continued self-eulogy of two thousand lines, yet we read it to the end without any feeling of distaste, almost without a consciousness that we have been listening all the while to a man praising himself. There are none of the cold particles in it, the hardness and self-ends which render vanity

and egotism hateful. He seems to be praising another person, under the mask of self; or rather we feel that it was indifferent to him where he found the virtue which he celebrates; whether another's bosom, or his own, were its chosen receptacle. His poems are full, and this in particular is one downright confession, of a generous self-seeking. But by self he sometimes means a great deal, —his friends, his principles, his country, the human race.

Whoever expects to find in the satirical pieces of this writer any of those peculiarities which pleased him in the satires of Dryden or Pope, will be grievously disappointed. Here are no high-finished characters, no nice traits of individual nature, few or no personalities. The game run down is coarse general vice, or folly as it appears in classes. A liar, a drunkard, a coxcomb, is *stript and whipt;* no Shaftesbury, no Villiers, or Wharton, is curiously anatomized, and read upon. But to a well-natured mind there is a charm of moral sensibility running through them which amply compensates the want of those luxuries. Wither seems every where bursting with a love of goodness and a hatred of all low and base actions.—At this day it is hard to discover what parts in the poem here particularly alluded to, *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, could have occasioned the imprisonment of the author. Was Vice in High Places more suspicious than now? had she more power; or more leisure to listen after ill reports? That a man should be convicted of a libel when he named no names but Hate, and Envy, and Lust, and Avarice, is like one of the indictments in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, where Faithful is arraigned for having 'railed on our noble Prince Beelzebub, and spoken contemptibly of his honourable friends, the Lord Old Man, the Lord Carnal Delight, and the Lord Luxurious'. What unlucky jealousy could have tempted the great men of those days to appropriate such innocent abstractions to themselves!

Wither seems to have contemplated to a degree of idolatry his own possible virtue. He is for ever anticipating persecution and martyrdom; fingering, as it were, the flames, to try how he can bear them. Perhaps his premature defiance sometimes made him obnoxious to censures, which he would otherwise have slipped by.

The homely versification of these Satires is not likely to attract in the present day. It is certainly not such as we should expect from a poet 'soaring in the high region of his fancies with his garland and his singing robes about him' [a]; nor is it such as he has shown in his *Philarete*, and in some parts in his *Shepherds Hunting*. He seems to have adopted this dress with voluntary humility, as fittest for a moral teacher, as our divines chuse sober grey or black; but in their humility consists their sweetness. The deepest tone of moral feeling in them, (though all throughout is weighty, earnest and passionate) is in those pathetic injunctions against shedding of blood in quarrels, in the chapter entitled *Revenge*. The story of his own forbearance, which follows, is highly interesting. While the Christian sings his own victory over Anger, the Man of Courage cannot help peeping out to let you know, that it was some higher principle than *fear* which counselled his forbearance.

Whether encaged, or roaming at liberty, Wither never seems to have abated a jot of that free spirit, which sets its mark upon his writings, as much as a predominant feature of independence impresses every page of our late glorious Burns; but the elder poet wraps his proof-armour closer about him, the other wears his too much outwards; he is thinking too much of annoying the foe, to be quite easy within; the spiritual defences of Wither are a perpetual source of inward sunshine, the magnanimity of the modern is not without its alloy of soreness, and a sense of injustice, which seems perpetually to gall and irritate. Wither was better skilled in the 'sweet uses of adversity', he knew how to extract the 'precious jewel' from the head of the 'toad', without drawing any of the 'ugly venom' along with it.—The prison notes of Wither are finer than the wood notes of most of his poetical brethren. The description in the Fourth Eglogue of his *Shepherds Hunting* (which was composed during his imprisonment in the Marshalsea) of the power of the Muse to extract pleasure from common objects, has been oftener quoted, and is more known, than any part of his writings. Indeed the whole Eglogue is in a strain so much above not only what

[a] Milton.

himself, but almost what any other poet has written, that he himself could not help noticing it; he remarks, that his spirits had been raised higher than they were wont 'through the love of poesy'.—The praises of Poetry have been often sung in ancient and in modern times; strange powers have been ascribed to it of influence over animate and inanimate auditors; its force over fascinated crowds has been acknowledged; but, before Wither, no one ever celebrated its power *at home*, the wealth and the strength which this divine gift confers upon its possessor. Fame, and that too after death, was all which hitherto the poets had promised themselves from their art. It seems to have been left to Wither to discover, that poetry was a present possession, as well as a rich reversion; and that the Muse had promise of both lives, of this, and of that which was to come.

The *Mistress of Philarete* is in substance a panegyric protracted through several thousand lines in the mouth of a single speaker, but diversified, so as to produce an almost dramatic effect, by the artful introduction of some ladies, who are rather auditors than interlocutors in the scene; and of a boy, whose singing furnishes pretence for an occasional change of metre: though the seven syllable line, in which the main part of it is written, is that in which Wither has shown himself so great a master, that I do not know that I am always thankful to him for the exchange.

Wither has chosen to bestow upon the lady whom he commends, the name of Arete, or Virtue; and, assuming to himself the character of Philarete, or Lover of Virtue, there is a sort of propriety in that heaped measure of perfections, which he attributes to this partly real, partly allegorical, personage. Drayton before him had shadowed his mistress under the name of Idea, or Perfect Pattern, and some of the old Italian love-strains are couched in such religious terms as to make it doubtful, whether it be a mistress, or Divine Grace, which the poet is addressing.

In this poem (full of beauties) there are two passages of pre-eminent merit. The first is where the lover, after a flight of rapturous commendation, expresses his wonder why all men that are about his mistress, even to her very servants, do not view her with the same eyes that he does.

Sometime I do admire,
All men burn not with desire;
Nay I muse her servants are not
Pleading love; but O! they dare not.
And I therefore wonder, why
They do not grow sick and die.
Sure they would do so, but that,
By the ordinance of fate,
There is some concealed thing
So each gazer limiting,
He can see no more of merit
Than beseems his worth and spirit,
For in her a grace there shines,
That o'er-daring thoughts confines;
Making worthless men despair
To be lov'd of one so fair.
Yea the destinies agree,
Some *good judgments* blind should be,
And not gain the power of knowing
Those rare beauties in her growing.
Reason doth as much imply:
For if every judging eye,
Which beholdeth her, should there
Find what excellencies are;
All, o'ercome by those perfections,
Would be captive to affections.
So, in happiness unblest,
She for lovers should not rest.

The other is, where he has been comparing her beauties to gold, and stars, and the most excellent things in nature; and, fearing to be accused of hyperbole, the common charge against poets, vindicates himself by boldly taking upon him, that these comparisons are no hyperboles; but that the best things in nature do, in a lover's eye, fall short of those excellencies which he adores in her.

What pearls, what rubies can
Seem so lovely fair to man,
As her lips whom he doth love,
When in sweet discourse they move,
Or her lovelier teeth, the while
She doth bless him with a smile?
Stars indeed fair creatures be;
Yet amongst us where is he
Joys not more the whilst he lies
Sunning in his mistress' eyes,
Than in all the glimmering light
Of a starry winter's night?

Note the beauty of an eye—
And if aught you praise it by
Leave such passion in your mind,
Let my reason's eye be blind.
Mark if ever red or white
Any where gave such delight,
As when they have taken place
In a worthy woman's face.
. . . .
I must praise her as I may,
Which I do mine own rude way;
Sometime setting forth her glories
By unheard-of allegories—&c.

To the measure in which these lines are written, the wits of Queen Anne's days contemptuously gave the name of Namby Pamby, in ridicule of Ambrose Philips, who had used it in some instances, as in the lines on Cuzzoni, to my feeling at least, very deliciously; but Wither, whose darling measure it seems to have been, may shew, that in skilful hands it is capable of expressing the subtilest movements of passion. So true it is, which Drayton seems to have felt, that it is the poet who modifies the metre, not the metre the poet; in his own words, that

It's possible to climb;
To kindle, or to slake;
Altho' in Skelton's rhime.[a]

[a] A long line is a line we are long repeating. In the *Shepherds Hunting* take the following—

If thy verse doth bravely tower,
As she makes wing, she gets power;
Yet the higher she doth soar,
She's affronted still the more,
'Till she to the high'st hath past,
Then she rests with fame at last.

What longer measure can go beyond the majesty of this! What Alexandrine is half so long in pronouncing, or expresses *labor slowly but strongly surmounting difficulty* with the life with which it is done in the second of these lines? or what metre could go beyond these from *Philarete*—

Her true beauty leaves behind
Apprehensions in my mind
Of more sweetness, than all art
Or inventions can impart.
Thoughts too deep to be express'd,
And too strong to be suppress'd.

FIVE DRAMATIC CRITICISMS

I.—Mrs. GOULD (Miss BURRELL) IN 'DON GIOVANNI IN LONDON'

Olympic Theatre

[Printed in *The Examiner*, Nov. 22, 1818. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. I., 1903.]

This Theatre, fitted up with new and tasteful decorations, opened on Monday with a burletta founded upon a pleasant extravagance recorded of Wilmot the 'mad Lord' of Rochester. The house, in its renovated condition, is just what play-houses should be, and once were, from its size admirably adapted for seeing and hearing, and only perhaps rather too well lit up. Light is a good thing, but to preserve the eyes is still better. Elliston and Mrs. Edwin personated a reigning wit and beauty of the Court of Charles the Second to the life. But the charm of the evening to us, we confess, was the acting of Mrs. T. Gould (late Miss Burrell) in the burlesque *Don Giovanni* which followed. This admirable piece of foolery takes up our hero just where the legitimate drama leaves him, on the 'burning marl'. We are presented with a fair map of Tartarus, the triple-headed cur, the Furies, the Tormentors, and the Don, prostrate, thunder-smitten. But there is an elasticity in the original make of this *strange man*, as Richardson would have called him. He is not one of those who change with the change of climate. He brings with him to his new habitation *ardours* as glowing and constant as any which he finds there. No sooner is he recovered from his first surprise, than he falls to his old trade, is caught 'ogling *Proserpine*', and coquets with two she devils at once, till he makes the house *too hot to hold him ;* and *Pluto* (in whom a wise jealousy seems to produce the effects of kindness) turns him neck and heels out of his dominions,—much to the satisfaction of *Giovanni*, who stealing a boat from Charon, and a pair of light heels from *Mercury*, or (as he familiarly terms him) *Murky*, sets off with flying colours, conveying to the world above the souls of three damsels, just eloped from Styx, to comfort his

tender and new-born spiritualities on the journey. Arrived upon earth (with a new body, we are to suppose, but his old habits) he lights a-propos upon a tavern in London, at the door of which three merry weavers, widowers, are trouling a catch in triumph over their deceased spouses—

> They lie in yonder church-yard
> At rest—and so are we.

Their departed partners prove to be the identical lady ghosts who have accompanied the Don in his flight, whom he now delivers up in perfect health and good plight, not a jot the worse for their journey, to the infinite surprise, and consternation ill-dissembled, of their ill-fated, twice-yoked mates. The gallantries of the Don in his second state of probation, his meeting with *Leporello*, with *Donna Anna*, and a countless host of injured virgins besides, doing penance in the humble occupation of apple-women, fishwives, and sausage-fryers, in the purlieus of Billingsgate and Covent-garden, down to the period of his complete reformation, and being made an honest man of, by marrying into a sober English citizen's family, although infinitely pleasant in the exhibition, would be somewhat tedious in the recital: but something must be said of his representative.

We have seen Mrs. Jordan in male characters, and more ladies besides than we would wish to recollect—but never any that so completely answered the purpose for which they were so transmuted, as the Lady who enacts the mock *Giovanni*. This part, as it is played at the Great House in the Haymarket (Shade of Mozart, and ye living admirers of Ambrogetti, pardon the barbarity) had always something repulsive and distasteful to us.—We cannot sympathize with *Leporello's* brutal display of the *list*, and were shocked (no strait-laced moralists either) with the applauses, with the *endurance* we ought rather to say, which fashion and beauty bestowed upon that disgustful insult to feminine unhappiness. The *Leporello* of the Olympic Theatre is not one of the most refined order, but we can bear with an English blackguard better than with the hard Italian. But *Giovanni*—free, fine, frank-spirited, single-hearted creature, turning all the mischief into fun as harmless as toys, or children's *make-believe*, what praise can we repay to you, adequate to the pleasure which you have given

us ? We had better be silent, for you have no name, and our mention will but be thought fantastical. You have taken out the sting from the evil thing, by what magic we know not, for there are actresses of greater mark and attribute than you. With you and your *Giovanni* our spirits will hold communion, whenever sorrow or suffering shall be our lot. We have seen you triumph over the infernal powers ; and pain, and Erebus, and the powers of darkness, are henceforth ' shapes of a dream '.

†

II.—MISS KELLY AT BATH

[Printed in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal*, Jan. 30, 1819. Reprinted in *The Examiner*, Feb. 7, 8, 1819. First collected in *The Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb*, ed. Percy Fitzgerald (Moxon), 1875. Text of *Editio Princeps.*]

Dear G.—— I was thinking yesterday of our old play-going days, of your and my partiality to Mrs. Jordan ; of our disputes as to the relative merits of Dodd and Parsons ; and whether Smith, or Jack Palmer, were the most of a Gentleman. The occasion of my falling into this train of thinking was my learning from the newspapers that Miss Kelly is paying the Bath Theatre a visit. (Your own Theatre, I am sorry to find, is shut up, either from parsimonious feelings, or through the influence of —— principles.[a]) This lady has long ranked among the most considerable of our London performers. If there are one or two of greater name, I must impute it to the circumstance, that she has never burst upon the town at once in the maturity of her powers ; which is a great advantage to debutantes, who have passed their probationary years in Provincial Theatres. We do not hear them tuning their instruments. But she has been winning her patient way from the humblest gradations to the eminence which she has now attained, on the self same boards which supported her first in the slender pretensions of chorus-singer. I very much wish that you would go and see her. You will not see Mrs. Jordan, but something else ; something on the whole very little, if at all, inferior to that lady,

[a] The word here omitted by the Bristol Editor, we suppose, is *methodistical* (Leigh Hunt in *The Examiner*).

in her best days. I cannot hope that you will think so; I do not even wish that you should. Our longest remembrances are the most sacred; and I shall revere the prejudice, that shall prevent you from thinking quite so favorably of her as I do.—I do not well know how to draw a parallel between their distinct manners of acting. I seem to recognize the same pleasantness and nature in both: but Mrs. Jordan's was the carelessness of a child; her child-like spirit shook off the load of years from her spectators; she seemed one whom care could not come near; a privileged being, sent to teach mankind what it most wants, joyousness. Hence, if we had more unmixed pleasure from her performances, we had, perhaps, less sympathy with them than with those of her successor. This latter lady's is the joy of a freed spirit, escaping from care, as a bird that has been limed; her smiles, if I may use the expression, seemed saved out of the fire, relics which a good and innocent heart had snatched up as most portable; her contents are visitors, not inmates: she can lay them by altogether; and when she does so, I am not sure that she is not greatest. She is, in truth, no ordinary tragedian. Her Yarico is the most intense piece of acting which I ever witnessed, the most heart-rending spectacle. To see her leaning upon that wretched reed, her lover—the very exhibition of whose character would be a moral offence, but for her clinging and noble credulity—to see her lean upon that flint, and by the strong workings of passion imagine it a god—is one of the most afflicting lessons of the yearnings of the human heart and its sad mistakes, that ever was read upon a stage. The whole performance is every where *African*, fervid, glowing. Nor is this any thing more than the wonderful force of imagination in this performer; for turn but the scene, and you shall have her come forward in some kindly home-drawn character of an English rustic, a Phœbe, or a Dinah Cropley, where you would swear that her thoughts had never strayed beyond the precincts of the dairy, or the farm; or her mind known less tranquil passions than she might have learned among the flock, her out-of-door companions. See her again in parts of pure fun, such as the House-maid in the Merry Mourners, where the suspension of the broom

in her hand, which she had been delightfully twirling, on unexpectedly encountering her sweetheart in the character of a fellow-servant, is quite equal to Mrs. Jordan's cordial inebriation in Nell.—I do not know whether I am not speaking it to her honor, that she does not succeed in what are called fine lady parts. Our friend C. once observed, that no man of genius ever figured as a gentleman. Neither did any woman, gifted with Mrs. Jordan's or Miss Kelly's sensibilities, ever take upon herself to shine as a fine lady, the very essence of this character consisting in the entire repression of all genius and all feeling. To sustain a part of this kind to the life, a performer must be haunted by a perpetual self-reference: she must be always thinking of herself, and how she looks, and how she deports herself in the eyes of the spectators; whereas the delight of actresses of true feeling, and their chief power, is to elude the personal notice of an audience, to escape into their parts, and hide themselves under the hood of their assumed character. Their most graceful self-possession is in fact a self-forgetfulness; an oblivion alike of self and of spectators. For this reason your most approved epilogue-speakers have been always ladies who have possessed least of this self-forgetting quality; and I think I have seen the amiable actress in question suffering some embarrassment, when she has had an address of this sort to deliver; when she found the modest veil of personation, which had half hid her from the audience, suddenly withdrawn, and herself brought without any such qualifying intervention before the public.

I should apologise for the length of this letter, if I did not remember the lively interest you used to take in theatrical performances.—[1]I am, &c. &c., * * * *.

III.—RICHARD BROME'S 'JOVIAL CREW'

[Printed in *The Examiner*, July 4, 5, 1819. First collected in R. H. Shepherd's *Complete Works of Charles Lamb*, 1874.]

The *Jovial Crew* or the *Merry Beggars* has been revived here [at the English Opera] after an interval, as the bills

[1] *See Editor's Notes.*

tell us, of seven years. Can it be so long (it seems but yesterday) since we saw poor LOVEGROVE in *Justice Clack?* his childish treble still pipes in our ears: 'Whip 'em, whip 'em, whip 'em.' DOWTON was the representative of the Justice the other night, and shook our ribs most incontinently. He was in 'excellent fooling', and our lungs crowed chanticleer. Yet it appears to us, that there was a still higher strain of fatuity in his predecessor—that his eyes distilled a richer dotage. Perhaps after all it was an error of the memory. Defunct merit comes out upon us strangely.

Easy natural WRENCH was the *Springlove;* too comfortable a personage perhaps to personify *Springlove*, in whom the voice of the bird awakens a restless instinct of roaming that had slept during the winter. Miss STEVENSON certainly leaves us nothing to regret for the absence of the Lady, however agreeable, who formerly performed the part of *Meriel*. Miss STEVENSON is a fine open-countenanced lass, with glorious girlish manners. But the *Princess of Mumpers*, and *Lady Paramount*, of beggarly counterfeit accents, was *she* that played *Rachel*. Her gabbling lachrymose petitions; her tones, such as we have heard by the side of old woods, when an irresistible face has come peeping on one on a sudden; with her full black locks, and a *voice* —how shall we describe it?—a voice that was by nature meant to convey nothing but truth and goodness, but warped by circumstance into an assurance that she is telling us a lie—that catching twitch of the thievish irreproveable finger—those ballad-singers' notes, so vulgar yet so unvulgar—that assurance, so like impudence, and yet so many countless leagues removed from it—her jeers, which we had rather stand, than be caressed with other ladies' compliments, a summer's day long—her face, with a wild out-of-doors grace upon it—

Altogether, a brace of more romantic she-beggars it was never our fortune to meet in this supplicatory world. The youngest might have sate for 'pretty Bessy', whose father was an Earl, and whose legend still adorns the front of mine Hostess's doors at Bethnal-Green; and the other could be no less than the 'Beggar Maid' whom 'King Cophetua wooed'. 'What a lass that were', said a stranger

who sate beside us, speaking of Miss KELLY in *Rachel*, 'to go a gipseying through the world with.' We confess we longed to drop a tester in her lap, she begged so masterly.

By the way, this is the true *Beggar's Opera*. The other should have been called the *Mirror for Highwaymen*. We wonder the Societies for the Suppression of Mendicity (and other good things) do not club for the putting down of this infamous protest in favour of air, and clear liberty and honest license, and blameless assertion of man's original blest charter of blue skies, and vagrancy, and nothing-to-do.

* * * *

IV.—ISAAC BICKERSTAFF'S 'HYPOCRITE'

[Printed in *The Examiner*, Aug. 1, 2, 1819. First collected in R. H. Shepherd's *Complete Works of Charles Lamb*, 1874.]

By one of those strange perversities which actuate poor mortals in the place of motives (to persuade us into the notion that we are free agents, we presume), we had never till the other evening seen DOWTON in *Doctor Cantwell*. By a pious fraud of Mr. ARNOLD'S, who, by a process as simple as some of those by which MATHEWS metamorphoses his person, has converted the play into an opera,—a conversion, by the way, for which we are highly indebted to him,—we have been favoured with this rich novelty at our favourite theatre. It seems a little unreasonable to come lagging in with a posthumous testimony to the merits of a performance of which the town has long rung, but we cannot help remarking in Mr. DOWTON'S acting, the subtile *gradations* of the hypocrisy; the length to which it runs in proportion as the recipient is capable of taking it in; the gross palpable way in which he administers the dose in wholesale to old *Lady Lambert*, that rich fanatic; the somewhat more guarded manner in which he retails it out, only so much at a time as he can bear, to the somewhat less bitten fool her son; and the almost absence of it, before the younger members of the family, when nobody else is by: how the cloven foot peeps out a little and a little more, till the diabolical nature is stung out at last into full manifestation of its horrid self. What a grand

insolence in the tone which he assumes, when he commands *Sir John* to quit *his* house! and then the tortures and agonies when he is finally baffled! It is in these last perhaps that he is greatest, and we should be doing injustice not to compare this part of the performance with, and in some respects to give it the preference above, the acting of Mr. KEAN in a situation nearly analogous, at the conclusion of the *City Madam*. *Cantwell* reveals his pangs with quite as much force, and without the assistance of those contortions which transform the detected *Luke* into the similitude of a mad tiger, or a foaming demon. DOWTON plays it neither like beast nor demon, but simply as it should be, a bold bad man pushed to extremity. Humanity is never once overstepped. Has it ever been noticed, the exquisite modulation with which he drawls out the word CHARLES, when he calls his secretary, so humble, so seraphic, so resigned. The most diabolical of her sex that we ever knew accented all her honey devil words in just such a hymn-like smoothness. The spirit of WHITFIELD seems hovering in the air, to suck in the blessed tones, so much like his own upon earth: Lady HUNTINGDON claps her neat white wings, and gives it out again in heaven to the sainted ones, in approbation.

Miss KELLY is not quite at home in *Charlotte;* she is too good for such parts. Her cue is to be natural; she cannot put on the modes of artificial life, and play the coquet as it is expected to be played. There is a frankness in her tones which defeats her purposes: we could not help wondering why her lover (Mr. PEARMAN) looked so rueful; we forgot that she was acting airs and graces, as she seemed to forget it herself, turning them into a playfulness which could breed no doubt for a moment which way her inclination ran. She is in truth not framed to tease or torment even in jest, but to utter a hearty *Yes* or *No;* to yield or refuse assent with a noble sincerity. We have not the pleasure of being acquainted with her, but we have been told that she carries the same cordial manners into private life. We have heard, too, of some virtues which she is in the practice of; but they are of a description which repay themselves, and with them neither we nor the public have any thing to do.

One word about WRENCH, who played the Colonel:—Was this man never unhappy? It seems as if care never came near him, as if the black ox could never tread upon his foot; we want something calamitous to befal him, to bring him down to us. It is a shame he should be suffered to go about with his well-looking happy face and tones, insulting us thin race of irritable and irritable-making critics. * * * *.

V.—NEW PIECES AT THE LYCEUM

[Printed in *The Examiner*, Aug. 8, 9, 1819. First collected in R. H. Shepherd's *Complete Works of Charles Lamb*, 1874.]

A plot has broke out at this theatre. Some quarrel has been breeding between the male and female performers, and the women have determined to set up for themselves. Seven of them, *Belles without Beaux* they call themselves, have undertaken to get up a piece without any assistance from the men, and in our opinion have established their point most successfully. There is Miss CAREW with her silvery tones, and Miss STEVENSON with her delicious mixture of the school-girl and the waiting-maid, and Miss KELLY sure to be first in any mischief, and Mrs. CHATTERLY with some of the best acting we have ever witnessed, and Miss LOVE, worthy of the *name*, and Mrs. GROVE that rhymes to her, and Mrs. RICHARDSON who might in charity have been allowed somewhat a larger portion of the dialogue. The effect was enchanting. We mean, for once. We do not want to encourage these Amazonian vanities. Once or twice we longed to have WRENCH bustling among them. A lady who sat near us was observed to gape for want of variety. To us it was delicate quintessence, an apple-pye made all of quinces. We remember poor HOLCROFT'S last Comedy, which positively died from the opposite excess; it was choked up with men, and perished from a redundancy of male population. It had nine principal men characters in it, and but one woman, and she of no very ambiguous character. Mrs. HARLOW, to do the part justice, chose to play it in scarlet.

We did not know Mrs. CHATTERLY'S merits before; she plays, with downright sterling good acting, a prude who

is to be convinced out of her prudery by Miss KELLY'S (we did not catch her stage-name) assumption of the dress and character of a brother of seventeen, who makes the prettiest unalarming Platonic approaches; and in the shyest mask of moral battery, no one step of which you can detect, or say *this* is decidedly going too far, vanquishes at last the ice of her scruples, brings her into an infinite scrape, and then with her own infinite good humour sets all to right, and brings her safe out of it again with an explanation. Mrs. CHATTERLY'S embarrassments were masterly. Miss STEVENSON her maid's start, at surprising a youth in her mistress's closet at midnight, was quite as good. Miss KELLY we do not care to say any thing about, because we have been accused of flattering her. The truth is, this lady puts so much intelligence and good sense into every part which she plays, that there is no expressing an honest sense of her merits, without incurring a suspicion of that sort. But what have we to gain by praising Miss KELLY?

Altogether this little feminine republic, this provoking experiment, went off most smoothly. What a nice world it would be, we sometimes think, *all women!* but then we are afraid we slip in a fallacy unawares into the hypothesis; we somehow edge in the idea of ourselves as spectators or something among them.

We saw WILKINSON after it in *Walk for a Wager*. What a picture of Forlorn Hope! of abject orphan destitution! he seems to have no friends in the world but his legs, and he plies them accordingly. He goes walking on like a perpetual motion. His continual ambulatory presence performs the part of a Greek chorus. He is the walking Gentleman of the piece; a Peripatetic that would make a Stoic laugh. He made us cry. His *Muffincap* in *Amateurs and Actors* is just such another piece of acting. We have seen charity boys, both of St. Clement's and Farringdon without, looking just as old, ground down out of all semblance of youth, by abject and hopeless neglect—you cannot guess their age between fifteen and fifty. If Mr. PEAK is the author of these pieces, he has no reason to be piqued at their reception.

We must apologize for an oversight in our last week's

article. The allusion made to Mr. KEAN'S acting of *Luke* in the *City Madam* was totally inapplicable to the part and to the play. We were thinking of his performance of the concluding scenes of the *New Way to Pay Old Debts*. We confounded one of MASSINGER'S strange heroes with the other. It was *Sir Giles Overreach* we meant; nor are we sure that our remark was just, even with this explanation. When we consider the intense tone, in which Mr. KEAN thinks it proper (and he is quite as likely to be in the right as his blundering critic) to pitch the temperament of that monstrous character from the beginning, it follows but logically and naturally, that where the wild uncontrollable man comes to be baffled of his purpose, his passions should assume a frenzied manner, which it was altogether absurd to expect should be the same with the manner of the cautious and self-restraining *Cantwell*, even when he breaks loose from all bonds in the agony of his final exposure. We never felt more strongly the good sense of the saying, —Comparisons are odious. They betray us not seldom into bitter errors of judgment; and sometimes, as in the present instance, into absolute matter of fact blunders. But we have recanted. * * * *.

REVIEW OF FALSTAFF'S LETTERS

[Printed in *The Examiner*, Sept. 5, 6, 1819; *The Indicator*, Jan. 24, 1821. First collected in R. H. Shepherd's *Complete Works of Charles Lamb*, 1874.]

Original Letters, &c., of Sir John Falstaff and his Friends; now first made public by a Gentleman, a descendant of Dame Quickly, from genuine MSS. which have been in the possession of the Quickly Family near four hundred years. London: Robinsons, 1796

A COPY of this work sold at the Roxburgh sale for five guineas. We have both before and since that time picked it up at stalls for eighteen pence. Reader, if you shall ever light upon a copy in the same way, we counsel you to buy it. We are deceived if there be not in it much of the true Shakspearian stuff. We present you with a few of the Letters, which may speak for themselves :—

Falstaff to the Prince

'I pr'ythee, Hal, lend me thy 'kerchief. An thy unkindness have not started more salt gouts down my poor old cheek, than my good rapier hath of blood from foemen's gashes in five and thirty years' service, then am I a very senseless mummy. I squander away in drinkings monies belonging to the soldiery! I do deny it—they have had part—the surplus is gone in charity—accuse the parish officers—make them restore—the whoreson wardens do now put on the cloak of supplication at the church doors, intercepting gentlemen for charity, foorsooth!—'Tis a robbery, a villainous robbery! to come upon a gentleman reeking with piety, God's book in his hand, brimfull of the sacrament! Thou knowest, Hal, as I am but man, I dare in some sort leer at the plate and pass, but as I have the body and blood of Christ within me, could I do it? An I did not make an oblation of a matter of ten pound after the battle of Shrewsbury, in humble gratitude for thy safety, Hal, then am I the veriest transgressor denounced in God's code. But I'll see them damned ere I'll be charitable again. Let 'em coin the plate—let them coin the holy chalice. . . .'

The Same to the Same

'Ha! ha! ha! And dost thou think I would not offer up ten pound for thee? yea, a hundred—more—but take heed of displeasing in thy sacrifice. Cain did bring a kid, yea, a firstling upon the altar, and the blaze ascended not. Abel did gather simple herbs, penny-royal, Hal, and mustard, a fourpenny matter, and the odour was grateful. I had ten pound for the holy offertory—mine ancient Pistol doth know it—but the angel did arrest my hand. Could I go beyond the word?—the angel which did stretch forth his finger, lest the good patriarch should slay his son. —That Ned Poins hath more colours than a jay, more abuse than a taught pie, and for wit—the cuckow's dam may be Fool of the Court to him. I lie down at Shrewsbury out of base fear! I melt into roods, and acres, and poles! I tell thee what, Hal, there's not a subject in the land hath half my temperance of valour.—Did I not see thee com-

bating the man-queller, Hotspur ; yea, in peril of subduement ? Was it for me to lose my sweet Hal without a thrust, having my rapier, my habergion, my good self about me ? I did lie down in the hope of sherking him in the rib—four drummers and a fifer did help me to the ground : —didst thou not mark how I did leer upon thee from beneath my buckler ? That Poins hath more scurrility than is in a whole flock of disquieted geese.

'For the rebels I did conceal, thou should'st give me laud. I did think thou wert already encompassed with more enemies than the resources of men could prevent overwhelming thee : yea, that thou wert the dove on the waters of Ararat, and didst lack a resting-place. Was it for me to heap to thy manifold disquiets ? Was it for me to fret thee with the advice of more enemies than thou didst already know of ? I could not take their lives, and therefore did I take their monies. I did fine them, lest they should scape, Hal, thou dost understand me, without chastisement ; yea, I fined them for a punishment. They did make oath on the point of my sword to be true men :— an the rogues forswore themselves, and joined the Welchman, let them look to it—'tis no 'peachment of my virtue....'

AGAIN

'Oh ! I am setting on a nest of the most unfledged cuckows that ever brooded under the wing of hawk. Thou must know, Hal, I had note of a good hale recruit or two in this neighbourhood. In other shape came I not ; look to it, Master Shallow, that in other shape I depart not. But I know thou art ever all desire to be admitted a Fellow Commoner in a jest. Robert Shallow, Esq. judgeth the hamlet of Cotswold. Doth not the name of judge horribly chill thee ? With Aaron's rod in his hand, he hath the white beard of Moses on his chin. In good sooth his perpetual countenance is not unlike what thou wouldst conceit of the momentary one of the lunatic Jew, when he tumbled God's tables from the mount. He hath a quick busy gait—more of this upright Judge (perpendicular as a pikeman's weapon, Hal,) anon. I would dispatch with these Bardolph ; but the knave's hands—(I cry thee mercy) his mouth is

full in preventing desertion among my recruits. An every liver among them haven't stood me in three and forty shilling, then am I a naughty escheator.—I tell thee what, Hal, I'd fight against my conscience for never a Prince in Christendom but thee.—Oh! this is a most damnable cause, and the rogues know it—they'll drink nothing but sack of three and twopence a gallon; and I enlist me none but tall puissant fellows that would quaff me up Fleet-ditch, were it filled with sack—picked men, Hal—such as will shake my Lord of York's mitre. I pray thee, sweet lad, make speed—thou shalt see glorious deeds.'

How say you, reader, do not these inventions smack of Eastcheap? Are they not nimble, forgetive, evasive? Is not the humour of them elaborate, cogitabund, fanciful? Carry they not the true image and superscription of the father which begat them? Are they not steeped all over in character—subtle, profound, unctuous? Is not here the very effigies of the Knight? Could a counterfeit *Jack Falstaff* come by these conceits? Or are you, reader, one who delights to drench his mirth in tears? You are, or, peradventure, have been a lover; a 'dismissed bachelor', perchance, one that is 'lass-lorn'. Come, then, and weep over the dying bed of such a one as thyself. Weep with us the death of poor *Abraham Slender*.

Davy to Shallow

'Master Abram is dead, gone, your Worship, dead! Master Abram! Oh! good your Worship, a's gone. A' never throve, since a' came from Windsor—'twas his death. I called him rebel, your Worship—but a' was all subject—a' was subject to any babe, as much as a King—a' turned, *like as it were the latter end of a lover's lute*—a' was all peace and resignment—a' took delight in nothing but his Book of Songs and Sonnets—a' would go to the Stroud side under the large beech tree, and sing, 'till 'twas quite pity of our lives to mark him; for his chin grew as long as a muscle.—Oh! a' sung his soul and body quite away—a' was lank as any greyhound, and had such a scent! I hid his love-songs among your Worship's law-books; for I thought, if a' could not get at them, it might be to

his quiet ; but a' snuffed them out in a moment. Good your Worship, have the wise woman of Brentford secured —Master Abram may have been conjured—Peter Simple says, a' never looked up after a' sent for the wise woman. —Marry, a' was always given to look down afore his elders ; a' might do it, a' was given to it—your Worship knows it ; but then 'twas peak and pert with him, marry, in the turn of his heel.—A' died, your Worship, just about one, at the crow of the cock.—I thought how it was with him ; for a' talked as quick, ay, marry, as glib as your Worship ; and a' smiled, and looked at his own nose, and called "Sweet Ann Page". I asked him if a' would eat—so a' bad us commend him to his cousin Robert (a' never called your Worship so before) and bad us get hot meat, for a' would not say "nay" to Ann again.[a] But a' never lived to touch it—a' began all in a moment to sing "Lovers all, a Madrigall". 'Twas the only song Master Abram ever learnt out of book, and clean by heart, your Worship —and so a' sung, and smiled, and looked askew at his own nose, and sung, and sung on, till his breath waxed shorter, and shorter, and shorter, and a' fell into a struggle and died. Alice Shortcake craves, she may make his shroud. . . .'

* * * * * * * * * *

Should these specimens fail to rouse your curiosity to see the whole, it may be to your loss, gentle reader, but it will give small pain to the spirit of him that wrote this little book ; my fine-tempered friend, J. W.—for not in authorship, or the spirit of authorship, but from the fullness of a young soul, newly kindling at the Shakspearian flame, and bursting to be delivered of a rich exuberance of conceits,—I had almost said *kindred with those of the full Shakspearian genius itself*,—were these letters dictated. We remember when the inspiration came upon him ; when the plays of Henry the Fourth were first put into his hands. We think at our recommendation he read them, rather late in life, though still he was but a youth. He may have forgotten, but we cannot, the pleasant evenings which ensued at the Boar's Head (as we called our tavern, though in reality the sign was not that, nor the street Eastcheap, for that honoured place of resort has long since passed

[a] Vide, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, latter part of 1st scene, 1st act.

away) when over our pottle of Sherris he would talk you nothing but pure *Falstaff* the long evenings through. Like his, the wit of J. W. was deep, recondite, imaginative, full of goodly figures and fancies. Those evenings have long since passed away, and nothing comparable to them has come in their stead, or can come. 'We have heard the chimes at midnight.' * * * *.

REVIEW OF 'NUGÆ CANORÆ': POEMS BY CHARLES LLOYD

[Printed in *The Examiner*, Oct. 24, 25, 1819. First collected in R. H. Shepherd's *Complete Works of Charles Lamb*, 1874.]

The reader who shall take up these poems in the mere expectation of deriving amusement for an idle hour, will have been grievously misled by the title. *Nugæ* they certainly are not, but full of weight; earnest, passionate communings of the spirit with itself. He that reads them must come to them in a serious mood; he should be one that has descended into his own bosom; that has probed his own nature even to shivering; that has indulged the deepest yearnings of affection, and has had them strangely flung back upon him; that has built to himself a fortress out of conscious weakness; that has cleaved to the rock of his early religion, and through hope in it hath walked upon the uneasy waters.

We should be sorry to convey a false notion. Mr. Lloyd's religion has little of pretence or sanctimoniousness about it; it is worn as an armour of self-defence, not as a weapon of outward annoyance: the believing may be drawn by it, and the unbelieving need not be deterred. The Religionist of Nature may find some things to venerate in its mild Christianity, when he shall discover in a volume, generally hostile to new experiments in philosophy and morals, some of its tenderest pages dedicated to the virtues of *Mary Wolstonecraft Godwin*.

Mr. Lloyd's poetry has not much in it that is narrative or dramatic. It is richer in natural description; but the *imagery* is for the most part embodied with, and made subservient to, the *sentiment*, as in many of the sonnets, &c.

His genius is metaphysical and profound; his verses are made up of deep feeling, accompanied with the perpetual running commentary of his own deeper self-reflection. His affections seem to run kindliest in domestic channels; and there are some strains, commemorative of a dead relative, which, while they do honour to the heart of the writer, are of too sacred a nature, we think, almost to have been committed to print at all; much less would they bear exposal among the miscellaneous matter indispensible to a public journal. We prefer therefore giving an extract from the fine blank verse poem, entitled *Christmas*. It is richly embued with the meditative, introspective cast of mind, so peculiar to this author :—

There is a time
When first sensation paints the burning cheek,
Fills the moist eye, and quickens the keen pulse,
That mystic meanings half-conceived invest
The simplest forms, and all doth speak, all lives
To the eager heart! At such a time to me
Thou cam'st, dear holiday! Thy twilight glooms
Mysterious thoughts awaken'd, and I mus'd
As if possest, yea felt as I had known
The dawn of inspiration. Then the days
Were sanctified by feeling, all around
Of an indwelling presence darkly spake.
Silence had borrow'd sounds to cheat the soul!
And, to the toys of life, the teeming brain,
Impregning them with its own character,
Gave preternatural import; the dull face
Was eloquent, and e'en the idle air
Most potent shapes, varying and yet the same,
Substantially express'd.

But soon my heart,
Unsatisfied with blissful shadows, felt
Achings of vacancy, and own'd the throb
Of undefin'd desire, while lays of love
Firstling and wild stole to my trem'lous tongue.
To me thy rites were mockery then, thy glee
Of little worth. More pleas'd I trod the waste
Sear'd with the sleety wind, and drank its blast;
Deeming thy dreary shapes most strangely sweet,
Mist-shrouded winter! in mute loneliness
I wore away the day which others hail'd
So cheerily, still usher'd in with chaunt
Of carol, and the merry ringers' peal,
Most musical to the good man that wakes
And praises God in gladness.

But soon fled
The dreams of love fantastic! Still the Friend,
The Friend, the wild roam o'er the drifted snows
Remain unsung! then when the wintry view
Objectless, mist-hidden, or in uncouth forms
Prank'd by the arrowy flake, might aptly yield
New stores to shaping fantasy, I rov'd
With him my lov'd companion! Oh, 'twas sweet;
Ye who have known the swell that heaves the breast
Pregnant with loftiest poesy, declare—
Is aught more shooting to the charmed soul
Than friendship's glow, the independent dream
Gathering when all the frivolous shews are fled
Of artificial life; when the wild step
Boundeth on wide existence, unbeheld,
Uncheck'd, and the heart fashioneth its hope
In Nature's school, while Nature bursts around,
Nor Man her spoiler meddles in the scene!
Farewell, dear day, much hath it sooth'd my heart
To chaunt thy frail memorial.

Now advance
The darkening years, and I do sojourn, home!
From thee afar. Where the broad-bosom'd hills,
Swept by perpetual clouds, of Scotland, rise,
Me fate compels to tarry. Ditty quaint
Or custom'd carol, there my vacant ear
Ne'er blest! I thought of home and happier days!
And, as I thought, my vexed spirit blam'd
That austere race, who, mindless of the glee
Of good old festival, coldly forbade
Th' observance which of mortal life relieves
The languid sameness, seeming too to bring
Sanction from hoar antiquity and years
Long past! * * * *.

REVIEW OF *FIRST FRUITS OF AUSTRALIAN POETRY*

Sydney, New South Wales. Printed for Private Distribution

[This review of Barron Field's poems was printed in *The Examiner*, Jan. 16, 17, 1820, and first collected in R. H. Shepherd's *Complete Works, &c.*, 1874.]

I first adventure; follow me who list;
And be the second Austral Harmonist.

Whoever thou art that hast transplanted the British wood-notes to the far-off forest which the Kangaroo haunts

—whether thou art some involuntary exile that solaces his sad estrangement with recurrence to his native notes, with more wisdom than those captive Hebrews of old refused to sing their Sion songs in a strange land—or whether, as we rather suspect, thou art that valued friend of ours, who, in thy young time of life, together with thy faithful bride, thy newly ' wedded flower ', didst, in obedience to the stern voice of duty, quit thy friends, thy family, thy pleasing avocations, the Muses with which thou wert as deeply smitten as any, we believe, in our age and country, to go and administer tedious justice in inauspicious unliterary THIEFLAND [a]—we reclaim thee for our own, and gladly would transport thee back to thy native ' fields ', and studies congenial to thy habits.

We know a merry Captain, and co-navigator with Cook, who prides himself upon having planted the first pun in Otaheite. It was in their own language, and the islanders first looked at him, then stared at one another, and all at once burst out into a genial laugh. It was a stranger, and as a stranger they gave it welcome. Many a quibble of their own growth, we doubt not, has since sprung from that well-timed exotic. Where puns flourish, there must be no inconsiderable advance in civilization. The same good results we are willing to augur from this dawn of refinement at Sydney. They were beginning to have something like a theatrical establishment there, which we are sorry to hear has been suppressed ; for we are of opinion with those who think that a taste for such kind of entertainments is one remove at least from profligacy, and that Shakspeare and Gay may be as safe teachers of morality as the ordinary treatises which assume to instil that science. We have seen one of their play bills (while the thing was permitted to last) and were affected by it in no ordinary degree ; particularly in the omission of the titles of honour, which in this country are condescendingly conceded to the players. In their Dramatis Personæ *Jobson* was played by Smith ; *Lady Loverule*, Jones ; *Nell*, Wilkinson : Gentlemen and Lady Performers alike curtailed of their fair proportions. With a little patronage, we prophecy, that in a very few

[a] An elegant periphrasis for *the Bay*. Mr. Coleridge led us the way—
' CLOUDLAND, gorgeous land.'

years the histrionic establishment of Sydney would have risen in respectability; and the humble performers would, by tacit leave, or open permission, have been allowed to use the same encouraging affixes to their names, which dignify their prouder brethren and sisters in the mother country. What a moral advancement, what a lift in the scale, to a Braham or a Stephens of New South Wales, to write themselves *Mr.* and *Miss!* The King here has it not in his power to do so much for a Commoner, no, not though he dub him a Duke.

The 'First Fruits' consist of two poems. The first celebrates the plant *epacris grandiflora;* but we are no botanists, and perhaps there is too much matter mixed up in it from the *Midsummer Night's Dream,* to please some readers. The thefts are indeed so open and palpable, that we almost recur to our first surmise, that the author must be some unfortunate wight, sent on his travels for plagiarisms of a more serious complexion. But the old matter and the new blend kindly together; and must, we hope, have proved right acceptable to more than one

> ———Among the Fair
> Of that young land of Shakspeare's tongue.

We select for our readers the second poem; and are mistaken, if it does not relish of the graceful hyperboles of our elder writers. We can conceive it to have been written by Andrew Marvel, supposing him to have been banished to Botany Bay, as he did, we believe, once meditate a voluntary exile to Bermuda. See his fine poem, 'Where the remote Bermudas ride'. * * * *.

'The Kangaroo'

'—— mixtumque genus, prolesque biformis.'—Virg., *Æn.*, vi.

Kangaroo, Kangaroo!
Thou spirit of Australia,
That redeems from utter failure,
From perfect desolation,
And warrants the creation
Of this fifth part of the earth,
Which would seem an after-birth,
Not conceiv'd in the beginning
(For God bless'd his work at first,

And saw that it was good),
But emerg'd at the first sinning,
When the ground was therefore curst;—
And hence this barren wood!

Kangaroo, Kangaroo!
Tho' at first sight we should say,
In thy nature that there may
Contradiction be involv'd,
Yet, like discord well resolv'd,
It is quickly harmoniz'd.
Sphynx or mermaid realiz'd,
Or centaur unfabulous,
Would scarce be more prodigious,
[Or labyrinthine minotaur
With which great Theseus did war,]
Or Pegasus poetical,
Or hippogriff—chimeras all!
But, what Nature would compile,
Nature knows to reconcile;
And Wisdom, ever at her side,
Of all her children's justified.

She had made the squirrel fragile;
She had made the bounding hart;
But a third so strong and agile
Was beyond e'en Nature's art.
So she join'd the former two
In thee, Kangaroo!
To describe thee, it is hard:
Converse of the camélopard,
Which beginneth camel-wise,
But endeth of the panther size,
Thy fore half, it would appear,
Had belong'd to 'some small deer,'
Such as liveth in a tree;
By thy hinder, thou should'st be
A large animal of chase,
Bounding o'er the forest's space;—
Join'd by some divine mistake,
None but Nature's hand can make—
Nature, in her wisdom's play,
On Creation's holiday.
For howsoe'er anomalous,
Thou yet art not incongruous,
Repugnant or preposterous.
Better-proportion'd animal,
More graceful or ethereal,
Was never followed by the hound,
With fifty steps to thy one bound.
Thou canst not be amended: no;
Be as thou art; thou best art so.

When sooty swans are once more rare,
And duck-moles [a] the museum's care,
Be still the glory of this land,
Happiest work of finest hand!

A TRUE STORY

To the Indicator

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Sir,—When I was a young boy, I had delicate health, and was somewhat of a pensive and contemplative turn of mind: it was my delight, in the long summer evenings, to slip away from my noisy and more robust companions, that I might walk in the shade of a venerable wood, my favourite haunt, and listen to the cawing of the old rooks, who seemed as fond of this retreat as I was.

One evening I sat later than usual, though the distant sound of the cathedral clock had more than once warned me to my home. There was a stillness in all nature that I was unwilling to disturb by the least motion. From this reverie I was suddenly startled by the sight of a tall slender female, who was standing by me, looking sorrowfully and steadily in my face. She was dressed in white, from head to foot, in a fashion that I had never seen before; her garments were unusually long and flowing, and rustled as she glided through the low shrubs near me, as if they were made of the richest silk. My heart beat as if I was dying, and I knew not that I could have stirred from the spot: but she seemed so very mild and beautiful, I did not attempt it. Her pale brown hair was braided round her head, but there were some locks that strayed upon her neck; and, altogether, she looked like a lovely picture but not like a living woman. I closed my eyes forcibly

[a] The *cygnus niger* of Juvenal is no *rara avis* in Australia; and time has here given ample proof of the *ornithorynchus paradoxus*. [Barron Field's note.]

with my hands, and when I looked again she had vanished.

I cannot exactly say why I did not on my return speak of this beautiful appearance: nor why, with a strange mixture of hope and fear, I went again and again to the same spot, that I might see her. She always came, and often in the storm and plashing rain, that never seemed to touch or to annoy her, and looked sweetly at me, and silently passed on: and though she was so near to me, that once the wind lifted those light straying locks, and I felt them against my cheek, yet I never could move or speak to her. I fell ill; and when I recovered, my mother closely questioned me of the tall lady, of whom, in the height of my fever, I had so often spoken.

I cannot tell you what a weight was taken from my boyish spirits, when I learned that this was no apparition, but a most lovely woman; not young, though she had kept her young looks, for the grief which had broken her heart seemed to have spared her beauty.

When the rebel troops were retreating after their total defeat, in that very wood I was so fond of, a young officer, unable any longer to endure the anguish of his wounds, sunk from his horse, and laid himself down to die. He was found there by the daughter of Sir Henry R——, and conveyed by a trusty domestic to her father's mansion. Sir Henry was a loyalist: but the officer's desperate condition excited his compassion, and his many wounds spoke a language a brave man could not misunderstand. Sir Henry's daughter, with many tears, pleaded for him, and promised that he should be carefully and secretly attended. And well she kept that promise: for she waited upon him (her mother being long dead) for many weeks, and anxiously watched for the first opening of eyes, that, languid as he was, looked brightly and gratefully upon his young nurse.

You may fancy, better than I can tell you, as he slowly recovered, all the moments that were spent in reading, and low-voiced singing, and gentle playing on the lute; and how many fresh flowers were brought to one whose wounded limbs would not bear him to gather them for himself; and how calmly the days glided on in the blessed-

ness of returning health, and in that sweet silence so carefully enjoined him. I will pass by this, to speak of one day, which, brighter and pleasanter than others, did not seem more bright or more lovely than the looks of the young maiden, as she gaily spoke of 'a little festival which (though it must bear an unworthier name) she meant really to give in honour of her guest's recovery'; 'And it is time, lady,' said he, 'for that guest, so tended and so honoured, to tell you his whole story, and speak to you of one who will help him to thank you: may I ask you, fair lady, to write a little billet for me, which, even in these times of danger, I may find some means to forward?' To his mother, no doubt, she thought, as with light steps and a lighter heart she seated herself by his couch, and smilingly bade him dictate; but, when he said, 'My dear wife,' and lifted up his eyes to be asked for more, he saw before him a pale statue, that gave him one look of utter despair, and fell, for he had no power to help her, heavily at his feet. Those eyes never truly reflected the pure soul again, or answered by answering looks the fond inquiries of her poor old father. She lived to be as I saw her,—sweet and gentle, and delicate always: but reason returned no more. She visited till the day of her death the spot where she first saw that young soldier, and dressed herself in the very clothes that he said so well became her.

REVIEW OF KEATS' *LAMIA*

[Printed in *The New Times*, July 19, 1820. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

LAMIA, ISABELLA, THE EVE OF SAINT AGNES, AND OTHER POEMS. BY JOHN KEATS. AUTHOR OF *ENDYMION*

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded 'scutcheon blush'd with blood of Queens and Kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for Heaven's grace and boon;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for Heaven——

Her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one;
Loosens her fragrant boddice; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees;
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair Saint Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppied warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day;
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain;
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

Such is the description which Mr. Keats has given us, with a delicacy worthy of Christabel, of a high-born damsel, in one of the apartments of a baronial castle, laying herself down devoutly to dream, on the charmed Eve of St. Agnes; and like the radiance, which comes from those old windows upon the limbs and garments of the damsel, is the almost Chaucer-like painting, with which this poet illumes every subject he touches. We have scarcely anything like it in modern description. It brings us back to ancient days, and

Beauty making-beautiful old rhymes.

The finest thing in the volume is the paraphrase of Boccaccio's story of the Pot of Basil. Two Florentines, merchants, discovering that their sister Isabella has placed her affections upon Lorenzo, a young factor in their employ, when they had hopes of procuring for her a noble match, decoy Lorenzo, under the pretence of a ride, into a wood, where they suddenly stab and bury him. The anticipation

of the assassination is wonderfully conceived in one epithet, in the narration of the ride—

> So the two brothers, and their *murder'd* man,
> Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno's stream
> Gurgles—

Returning to their sister, they delude her with a story of their having sent Lorenzo abroad to look after their merchandises; but the spirit of her lover appears to Isabella in a dream, and discovers how and where he was stabbed, and the spot where they have buried him. To ascertain the truth of the vision, she sets out to the place, accompanied by her old nurse, ignorant as yet of her wild purpose. Her arrival at it, and digging for the body, is described in the following stanzas, than which there is nothing more awfully simple in diction, more nakedly grand and moving in sentiment, in Dante, in Chaucer, or in Spenser :—

> She gaz'd into the fresh-thrown mould, as though
> One glance did fully all its secrets tell;
> Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know
> Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well;
> Upon the murderous spot she seem'd to grow,
> Like to a native lily of the dell:
> Then with her knife, all sudden, she began
> To dig more fervently than misers can.
>
> Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon
> Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies,
> She kissed it with a lip more chill than stone,
> And put it in her bosom, where it dries
> And freezes utterly unto the bone
> Those dainties made to still an infant's cries:
> Then 'gan she work again; nor stay'd her care.
> But to throw back at times her veiling hair.
>
> That old nurse stood beside her wondering,
> Until her heart felt pity to the core
> At sight of such a dismal labouring,
> And so she kneeled, with her locks all hoar,
> And put her lean hand to the horrid thing:
> Three hours they labour'd at this travail sore;
> At last they felt the kernel of the grave,
> And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

To pursue the story in prose :—They find the body, and with their joint strengths sever from it the head, which Isabella takes home, and wrapping it in a silken scarf, entombs it in her garden-pot, covers it with mould, and

over it she plants sweet basil, which, watered with her tears, thrives so that no other basil tufts in all Florence throve like her basil. How her brothers, suspecting something mysterious in this herb, which she watched day and night, at length discover the head, and secretly convey the basil from her ; and how from the day that she loses her basil she pines away, and at last dies, we must refer our reader to the poem, or to the divine germ of it in Boccaccio. It is a great while ago since we read the original ; and in this affecting revival of it we do but

Weep again a long-forgotten woe.

More exuberantly rich in imagery and painting is the story of the Lamia. It is of as gorgeous stuff as ever romance was composed of. Her first appearance in serpentine form—

———a beauteous wreath with melancholy eyes—

her dialogue with Hermes, the *Star of Lethe*, as he is called by one of these prodigal phrases which Mr. Keats abounds in, which are each a poem in a word, and which in this instance lays open to us at once, like a picture, all the dim regions and their inhabitants, and the sudden coming of a celestial among them ; the charming of her into woman's shape again by the God ; her marriage with the beautiful Lycius ; her magic palace, which those who knew the street, and remembered it complete from childhood, never remembered to have seen before ; the few Persian mutes, her attendants,

———————————who that same year
Were seen about the markets : none knew where
They could inhabit ;——

the high-wrought splendours of the nuptial bower, with the fading of the whole pageantry, Lamia, and all, away, before the glance of Apollonius,—are all that fairy land can do for us. They are for younger impressibilities. To *us* an ounce of feeling is worth a pound of fancy; and therefore we recur again, with a warmer gratitude, to the story of Isabella and the pot of basil, and those never-cloying stanzas which we have cited, and which we think should disarm criticism, if it be not in its nature cruel ;

if it would not deny to honey its sweetness, nor to roses redness, nor light to the stars in Heaven; if it would not bay the moon out of the skies, rather than acknowledge she is fair.

SIR THOMAS MORE

[Printed in *The Indicator*, Dec. 20, 1820. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

Of the writings of this distinguished character little is remembered at present beyond his *Eutopia*, and some Epigrams. But there is extant a massive folio of his Theological Works in English, partly Practical Divinity, but for the greater part Polemic, against the grand Lutheran Heresy, just then beginning to flower. From these I many years ago made some extracts, rejecting only the antiquated orthography, (they being intended only for my own amusement) except in some instances of proper names, &c. I send them you as I find them, thinking that some of your readers may consider them as curious. The first is from a Tract against Tyndale, called the *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*.[a] The author of *Religio Medici* somewhere says, 'his conscience would give him the lye, if she should say that he absolutely detested or hated any essence *but the Devil*.' Whether Browne was not out in his metaphysics, when he supposed himself capable of hating, that is, *entertaining a personal aversion to*, a being so abstracted, or such a Concrete of all irreconcileable abstractions rather, as usually passes for the meaning of that name, I contend not; but that the same hatred in kind, which he professed against our great spiritual enemy, was in downright earnest cultivated and defended by More against that portentous phenomenon in those times, a *Heretic*, from his speeches against Luther and Tyndale cannot for a moment be doubted. His account of poor Hytton which follows (a reformado priest of the day) is penned with a wit and malice hyper-satanic. It is infinitely diverting in the midst of its diabolism, if it be not rather, what Coleridge calls,

Too wicked for a smile, too foolish for a tear.

[a] To some foregone Tract of More's, of which I have lost the title.

——' now to the intent that ye may somewhat see what good Christian faith Sir Thomas Hytton was of, this new saint of Tindale's canonization, in whose burning Tindale so gaily glorieth, and which hath his holiday so now appointed to him, that St. Polycarpus must give him place in the Calendar, I shall somewhat show you what wholesome heresies this holy martyr held. First ye shall understand, that he was a priest, and falling to Luther's sect, and after that to the sect of Friar Huskin and Zwinglius, cast off matins and mass, and all divine service, and so became an apostle, sent to and fro, between our English heretics beyond the sea, and such as were here at home. Now happed it so, that after he had visited here his holy congregations in divers corners and luskes lanes, and comforted them in the Lord to stand stiff with the devil in their errors and heresies, as he was going back again at Gravesend, *God considering the great labour that he had taken already, and determining to bring his business to his well-deserved end, gave him suddenly such a favour and so great a grace in the visage, that every man that beheld him took him for a thief.* For whereas there had been certain linen clothes pilfered away that were hanging on an hedge, and Sir Thomas Hytton was walking not far off *suspiciously in the meditation of his heresies :* the people doubting that the beggarly knave had stolen the clouts, fell in question with him and searched him, and so found they certain letters secretly conveyed in his coat, written from evangelical brethren here unto the evangelical heretics beyond the sea. And upon those letters founden, he was with his letters brought before the most Rev. Father in God the Archbishop of Canterbury, and afterward as well by his Lordship as by the Rev. Father the Bishop of Rochester examined, and after for his abominable heresies delivered to the secular hands and burned.'

What follows (from the same Tract) is *mildened* a little by the introduction of the name of Erasmus, More's intimate friend ; though by the sting in the rear of it, it is easy to see, that it was to a little temporising only, and to some thin politic partitions from these Reformers, that Erasmus owed his exemption from the bitter anathemas More had in store for them. The *love* almost made the *hate* more shocking by the contrast !

——' Then he (Tyndale) asketh me why I have not contended with Erasmus, whom he calleth my darling, of all this long while, for translating of this word *ecclesia* into this word *congregatio.* And then he cometh forth with his feat proper taunt, that I favour him of likelihood for making of his book of MORIA in my house. There had he hit me, lo ! save for lack of a little salt. I have not contended with Erasmus my darling, because I found no such malicious intent with Erasmus my darling, as I find with Tyndale. For had I found with Erasmus my darling the shrewd intent and purpose, that I find in Tyndale, Erasmus my darling should be no more my darling. But I find in Erasmus my darling, that he detesteth and abhorreth the errors and heresies, that Tyndale plainly teacheth and abideth by, and therefore Erasmus my

darling shall be my dear darling still. And surely if Tyndale had either never taught them, or yet had the grace to revoke them, then should Tyndale be my dear darling too. But while he holdeth such heresies still, I cannot take for my darling him that the devil taketh for his darling.'

The next extract is from a 'Dialogue concerning Heresies', and has always struck me as a master-piece of eloquent logic, and something in the manner of Burke, when he is stripping a sophism *sophistically;* as he treats Paine, and others *passim.*

——' And not to be of the foolish mind that Luther is, which wished in a sermon of his, that he had in his hand all the pieces of the holy cross, and saith that, if he so had, he would throw them there as never sun should shine on them. And for what worshipful reason would the wretch do such villainy to the cross of Christ? because, as he saith, that there is so much gold now bestowed about the garnishing of the pieces of the cross, that there is none left for poor folk. Is not this an high reason? as though all the gold, that is now bestowed about the pieces of the holy cross, would not have failed, to have been given to poor men, if they had not been bestowed about the garnishing of the cross. And as though there was nothing lost, but that is bestowed about Christ's cross. Take all the gold, that is spent about all the pieces of Christ's cross through Christendom (albeit many a good Christen prince, and other goodly people, hath honourably garnished many pieces thereof), yet, if all the gold were gathered together, it would appear a poor portion, in comparison of the gold that is bestowed upon cups. What speak we of cups? in which the gold, albeit that it be not given to poor men, yet is it saved, and may be given in alms when men will, *which they never will;* how small a portion, ween we, were the gold about all the pieces of Christ's cross, if it were compared with the gold that is *quite cast away* about the gilting of knives, swords, spurs, arras, and painted clothes: and (as though these things could not consume gold fast enough) the gilting of posts, and whole roofs, not only in palaces of princes and great prelates, but also many right mean men's houses. And yet, among all these things, could Luther spy no gold that *grievously glittered in his bleared eyes,* but only about the cross of Christ.—For that gold, if it were thence, the wise man weeneth, it would be straight given to poor men, and that where he daily see'th, that such as have their purse full of gold, give to the poor not one piece thereof; but, if they give ought, they ransack the bottom among all the gold, to seek out here an halfpenny, or *in his country* a brass penny whereof four make a farthing: *such goodly causes find they, that pretend holiness for the colour of their cloaked heresies.*'

I subjoin from the same 'Dialogue' More's cunning defence of Miracles done at Saints' shrines, on Pilgrimages, &c. all which he defends, as he was bound by holy church to do, most stoutly. The *manner* of it is arch and sur-

prising, and the narration infinitely naive; the *matter* is the old fallacy of confounding miracles (things happening out of nature) with natural things, the grounds of which we cannot explain. In this sense every thing is a miracle, and nothing is.

——'And first if men should tell you, that they saw before an image of the crucifix a dead man raised to life, ye would much marvel thereof, and so might ye well; yet could I tell you somewhat that I have seen myself, that methinketh as great marvel, but I have no lust to tell you, because that ye be so circumspect and ware in belief of any miracles, that ye would not believe it for me, but mistrust me for it.

'Nay, Sir (quod he), in good faith, if a thing seemed to me never so far unlikely, yet if ye would earnestly say that yourself have seen it, I neither would nor could mistrust it.

'Well (quod I), then ye may make me the bolder to tell ye. And yet will I tell you nothing, but that I would, if need were, find you good witness to prove it.

'It shall not need, Sir (quod he), but I beseech you let me hear it.

'Forsooth (quod I), because we speak of a man raised from death to life. There was in the parish of St. Stephen's in Walbrook, in London, where I dwelled before I come to Chelsith, a man and a woman, which are yet quick and quething, and young were they both. The eldest I am sure passed not twenty-four. It happed them, as doth among folk, the one to cast the mind to the other. And after many lets, for the maiden's mother was much against it, at last they came together, and were married in St. Stephen's church, which is not greatly famous for any miracles, but yet yearly on St. Stephen's day it is somewhat sought unto and visited with folk's devotion. But now short tale to make, this young woman (as manner is in brides ye wot well) was at night brought to bed with honest women. And then after that went the bridegroom to bed, and every body went their ways, and left them twain there alone. And the same night, yet abide, let me not lie, now in faith to say the truth I am not very sure of the time, but surely as it appeared afterward, it was of likelihood the same night, or some other time soon after, except it happened a little before.

'No force for the time (quod he).

'Truth (quod I), and as for the matter, all the parish will testify for truth, the woman was known for so honest. But for the conclusion, the seed of them twain turned in the woman's body, first into blood, and after into shape of manchild. And then waxed quick, and she great therewith. And was within the year delivered of a fair boy, and forsooth it was not then (for I saw it myself) passing the length of a foot. And I am sure he has grown now an inch longer than I.

'How long is it ago? (quod he).

'By my faith (quod I) about twenty-one years.

'Tush! (quod he), this is a worthy miracle!

'In good faith (quod I), never wist I that any man could tell that he had any other beginning. And methinketh that this is as great a miracle as the raising of a dead man.'

Diabolical Possession was a rag of the old abomination, which this Contunder of Heresies thought himself obliged no less to wrap tightly about the loins of his faith, than any of the *splendidiores panni* of the old red Harlot. But (read with allowance for the belief of the times) the narrative will be found affecting, particularly in what relates to the parents of the damsel, 'rich, and sore abashed.'

——'Amongst which (*true miracles*) I durst boldly tell you for one the wonderful work of God, that was within these few years wrought in the house of a right worshipful knight, Sir Roger Wentworth, upon divers of his children, and specially one of his daughters, a very fair young gentlewoman of twelve years of age, in marvellous manner vexed and tormented by our ghostly enemy the devil, her mind alienated and raving with despising and blasphemy of God, and hatred of all hallowed things, with knowledge and perceiving of the hallowed from the unhallowed, all were she nothing warned thereof. And after that moved in her own mind, and monished by the will of God, to go to our Lady of Ippiswitche. In the way of which pilgrimage, she prophesied and told many things done and said at the same time in other places, which were proved true, and many things said, lying in her trance, of such wisdom and learning, that right cunning men highly marvelled to hear of so young an unlearned maiden, when herself wist not what she said, such things uttered and spoken, as well learned men might have missed with a long study, and finally being brought and laid before the Image of our Blessed Lady, was there in the sight of many worshipful people so grievously tormented, and in face, eyen, look and countenance, so griesly changed, and her mouth drawn aside, and her eyen laid out upon her cheeks, that it was a terrible sight to behold. And after many marvellous things at the same time shewed upon divers persons by the devil through God's sufferance, as well all the remnant as the maiden herself, in the presence of all the company, restored to their good state perfectly cured and suddenly. And in this matter no pretext of begging, no suspicion of feigning, no possibility of counterfeiting, no simpleness in the seers, her father and mother right honourable and rich, *sore abashed to see such chances in their children*, the witnesses great number, and many of great worship, wisdom and good experience, the maid herself too young to feign, and the fashion itself too strange for any man to feign, and the end of the matter virtuous, the virgin so moved in her mind with the miracle, that she forthwith for aught her father could do, forsook the world, and professed religion in a very good and godly company at the Mynoresse, where she hath lived well and graciously ever since.'

I shall trouble you with one Excerpt more, from a 'Dialogue of Comfort against Tribulation'; because the style of it is solemn and weighty; and because it was written by More in his last imprisonment in the Tower, preparatory to his sentence. After witnessing his treat-

ment of Sir John Hytton, and his brethren, we shall be inclined to mitigate some of our remorse, that More should have suffered death himself *for conscience sake.* The reader will not do this passage justice, if he do not read it as part of a sermon ; and as putting himself into the feelings of an auditory of More's Creed and Times.

——' But some men now when this calling of God [any tribulation] causeth them to be sad, they be loth to leave their sinful lusts that hang in their hearts, and specially if they have any such kind of living, as they must needs leave off, or fall deeper in sin : or if they have done so many great wrongs, that they have many 'mends to make, that must (if they follow God) 'minish much their money, then are these folks (alas) woefully bewrapped, for God pricketh upon them of his great goodness still, and the grief of this great pang pincheth them at the heart, and of wickedness they wry away, and fro this tribulation they turn to their flesh for help, and labour to shake off this thought, and then they mend their pillow, and lay their head softer, and essay to sleep ; and when that will not be, then they find a talk awhile with them that lie by them. If that cannot be neither, then they lie and long for day, and then get them forth about their worldly wretchedness, the matter of their prosperity, the self-same sinful things with which they displease God most, and at length with many times using this manner, God utterly casteth them off. And then they set nought neither by God nor Devil. * * * But alas ! when death cometh, then cometh again their sorrow, then will no soft bed serve, nor no company make him merry, then must he leave his outward worship and comfort of his glory, and lie panting in his bed as if he were on a pine-bank, then cometh his fear of his evil life and his dreadful death. Then cometh the torment, his cumbered conscience and fear of his heavy judgment. Then the devil draweth him to despair with imagination of hell, and suffereth him not then to take it for a fable. And yet if he do, then findeth it the wretch no fable. * * * Some have I seen even in their last sickness set up in their death-bed underpropped with pillows, take their play-fellows to them, and comfort themselves with cards, and this they said did ease them well to put fantasies out of their heads ; and what fantasies trow you ? such as I told you right now of, their own lewd life and peril of their soul, of heaven and of hell that irked them to think of, and therefore cast it out with cards' play as long as ever they might, till the pure pangs of death pulled their heart fro their play, and put them in the case they could not reckon their game. And then left them their gameners, and slily slunk away, and long was it not ere they galped up the ghost. And what game they came then to, that God knoweth and not I. I pray God it were good, but I fear it very sore.'

* * * *.

THE CONFESSIONS OF H. F. V. H. DELAMORE, Esq.

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Sackville-street, 25*th March*, 1821

Mr. Editor,—A correspondent in your last Number,[a] blesses his stars, that he was never yet in the pillory; and, with a confidence which the uncertainty of mortal accidents but weakly justifies, goes on to predict that he never shall be. Twelve years ago, had a Sibyl prophesied to me, that I should live to be set in a worse place, I should have struck her for a lying beldam. There are degradations below that which he speaks of.

I come of a good stock, Mr. Editor. The Delamores are a race singularly tenacious of their honour; men who, in the language of Edmund Burke, feel a stain like a wound. My grand uncle died of a fit of the sullens for the disgrace of a public whipping at Westminster. He had not then attained his fourteenth year. Would I had died young!

For more than five centuries, the current of our blood hath flowed unimpeachably. And must it stagnate now?

Can a family be tainted backwards?—can posterity purchase disgrace for their progenitors?—or doth it derogate from the great Walter of our name, who received the sword of knighthood in Cressy field, that one of his descendants once sate * * * * * * * * * *?

Can an honour, fairly achieved in *quinto Edwardi Tertii* be reversed by a slip *in quinquagesimo Georgii Tertii?*—how stands the law?—what *dictum* doth the college deliver?—O Clarencieux! O Norroy!

Can a reputation, gained by hard watchings on the cold ground, in a suit of mail, be impeached by hard watchings on the cold ground in other circumstances—was the endurance equal?—why is the guerdon so disproportionate?

A priest mediated the ransom of the too valorous Reginald, of our house, captived in Lord Talbot's battles. It was a clergyman, who by his intercession abridged the period of my durance.

[a] Elia:—Chapter on Ears.

Have you touched at my wrongs yet, Mr. Editor ?—or must I be explicit as to my grievance ?

Hush, my heedless tongue.

Something bids me—' Delamore, be ingenuous.'

Once then, and only once——

Star of my nativity, hide beneath a cloud, while I reveal it !

Ancestors of Delamore, lie low in your wormy beds, that no posthumous hearing catch a sound!

Let no eye look over thee, while thou shalt peruse it, reader !

Once————

these legs, with Kent in the play, though for far less ennobling considerations, did wear ' cruel garters.'

Yet I protest it was but for a thing of nought—a fault of youth, and warmer blood—a calendary inadvertence I may call it—or rather a temporary obliviousness of the day of the week—timing my Saturnalia amiss.——

Streets of Barnet, infamous for civil broils, ye saw my shame !—did not your Red Rose rise again to dye my burning cheek ?

It was but for a pair of minutes, or so—yet I feel, I feel, that the gentry of the Delamores is extinguished for ever.——

Try to forget it, reader.——

(Signed) HENRY FRANCIS VERE HARRINGTON DELAMORE.[a]

THE GENTLE GIANTESS

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. vi, p. 529 (Dec. 1822). First collected in *Elia*. Second Series. Philadelphia, 1828.]

THE widow Blacket, of Oxford, is the largest female I ever had the pleasure of beholding. There may be her parallel upon the earth, but surely I never saw it. I take her to be lineally descended from the maid's aunt of Brainford, who caused Master Ford such uneasiness. She hath

[a] *Spes* may be assured, that the fact related in our last Number, signed ' Delamore ', and dated ' Sackville-Street ', is genuine, with the exception of the name and date. It is the writer's own story,

——quaeque ipse miserrima vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fui.

[*Note by Lamb in* THE LONDON MAGAZINE, *May, 1821, signed* * * * *.]

Atlantean shoulders; and, as she stoopeth in her gait—with as few offences to answer for in her own particular as any of Eve's daughters—her back seems broad enough to bear the blame of all the peccadillos that have been committed since Adam. She girdeth her waist—or what she is pleased to esteem as such—nearly up to her shoulders, from beneath which, that huge dorsal expanse, in mountainous declivity, emergeth. Respect for her alone preventeth the idle boys, who follow her about in shoals whenever she cometh abroad, from getting up and riding. —But her presence infallibly commands a reverence. She is indeed, as the Americans would express it, something awful. Her person is a burthen to herself, no less than to the ground which bears her. To her mighty bone, she hath a pinguitude withal, which makes the depth of winter to her the most desirable season. Her distress in the warmer solstice is pitiable. During the months of July and August, she usually renteth a cool cellar, where ices are kept, whereinto she descendeth when Sirius rageth. She dates from a hot Thursday—some twenty-five years ago. Her apartment in summer is pervious to the four winds. Two doors, in north and south direction, and two windows, fronting the rising and the setting sun, never closed, from every cardinal point, catch the contributory breezes. She loves to enjoy what she calls a quadruple draught. That must be a shrewd zephyr, that can escape her. I owe a painful face-ache, which oppresses me at this moment, to a cold caught, sitting by her, one day in last July, at this receipt of coolness. Her fan in ordinary resembleth a banner spread, which she keepeth continually on the alert to detect the least breeze. She possesseth an active and gadding mind, totally incommensurate with her person. No one delighteth more than herself in country exercises and pastimes. I have passed many an agreeable holiday with her in her favourite park at Woodstock. She performs her part in these delightful ambulatory excursions by the aid of a portable garden chair. She setteth out with you at a fair foot gallop, which she keepeth up till you are both well breathed, and then she reposeth for a few seconds. Then she is up again, for a hundred paces or so, and again resteth—her movement, on these sprightly occasions, being

something between walking and flying. Her great weight seemeth to propel her forward, ostrich-fashion. In this kind of relieved marching I have traversed with her many scores of acres on these well-wooded and well-watered domains. Her delight at Oxford is in the public walks and gardens, where, when the weather is not too oppressive, she passeth much of her valuable time. There is a bench at Maudlin, or rather, situated between the frontiers of that and * * * * * * *'s college—some litigation latterly, about repairs, has vested the property of it finally in * * * * * * *'s—where at the hour of noon she is ordinarily to be found sitting—so she calls it by courtesy—but in fact, pressing and breaking of it down with her enormous settlement; as both those Foundations, who, however, are good-natured enough to wink at it, have found, I believe, to their cost. Here she taketh the fresh air, principally at vacation times, when the walks are freest from interruption of the younger fry of students. Here she passeth her idle hours, not idly, but generally accompanied with a book—blest if she can but intercept some resident Fellow (as usually there are some of that brood left behind at these periods); or stray Master of Arts (to most of them she is better known than their dinner bell); with whom she may confer upon any curious topic of literature. I have seen these shy gownsmen, who truly set but a very slight value upon female conversation, cast a hawk's eye upon her from the length of Maudlin grove, and warily glide off into another walk—true monks as they are, and ungently neglecting the delicacies of her polished converse, for their own perverse and uncommunicating solitariness! Within doors her principal diversion is music, vocal and instrumental, in both which she is no mean professor. Her voice is wonderfully fine; but till I got used to it, I confess it staggered me. It is for all the world like that of a piping bulfinch, while from her size and stature you would expect notes to drown the deep organ. The shake, which most fine singers reserve for the close or cadence, by some unaccountable flexibility, or tremulousness of pipe, she carrieth quite through the composition; so that her time, to a common air or ballad, keeps double motion, like the earth—running the primary circuit of the

tune, and still revolving upon its own axis. The effect, as I said before, when you are used to it, is as agreeable as it is altogether new and surprising. The spacious apartment of her outward frame lodgeth a soul in all respects disproportionate. Of more than mortal make, she evinceth withal a trembling sensibility, a yielding infirmity of purpose, a quick susceptibility to reproach, and all the train of diffident and blushing virtues, which for their habitation usually seek out a feeble frame, an attenuated and meagre constitution. With more than man's bulk, her humours and occupations are eminently feminine. She sighs—being six foot high. She languisheth —being two feet wide. She worketh slender sprigs upon the delicate muslin—her fingers being capable of moulding a Colossus. She sippeth her wine out of her glass daintily—her capacity being that of a tun of Heidelburg. She goeth mincingly with those feet of hers—whose solidity need not fear the black ox's pressure. Softest, and largest of thy sex, adieu! by what parting attribute may I salute thee—last and best of the Titanesses—Ogress, fed with milk instead of blood—not least, or least handsome, among Oxford's stately structures—Oxford, who, in its deadest time of vacation, can never properly be said to be empty, having thee to fill it.

ELIA.

FRAGMENTS OF CRITICISM

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. vi, p. 563 (Dec. 1822), under the department entitled *The Miscellany*. First identified and reprinted in Mr. Bertram Dobell's *Sidelights on Charles Lamb*, 1903.]

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre. [*—Gray's Elegy.*]

There has always appeared to me a vicious mixture of the figurative with the real in this admired passage. The first two lines may barely pass, as not bad. But the *hands* laid in the earth, must mean the identical five-finger'd organs of the body; and how does this consist with their occupation of *swaying rods*, unless their owner

had been a schoolmaster; or *waking lyres*, unless he were literally a harper by profession? Hands that 'might have held the plough', would have some sense, for that work is strictly manual; the others only emblematically or pictorially so. Kings now-a-days sway no rods, *alias* sceptres, except on their coronation day; and poets do not necessarily strum upon the harp or fiddle, as poets. When we think upon dead cold fingers, we may remember the honest squeeze of friendship which they returned heretofore; we cannot but with violence connect their living idea, as opposed to death, with uses to which they must become metaphorical (*i.e.* less real than dead things themselves) before we can so with any propriety apply them.

He saw, but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.—Gray's Bard.

Nothing was ever more violently distorted, than this material fact of Milton's blindness having been occasioned by his intemperate studies, and late hours, during his prosecution of the defence against Salmasius—applied to the dazzling effects of too much mental vision. His corporal sight was blasted with corporal occupation; his inward sight was not impaired, but rather strengthened, by his task. If his course of studies had turned his brain, there would have been some fitness in the expression.

And since I cannot, I will prove a VILLAIN,
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
Soliloquy in Richard III.

The performers, whom I have seen in this part, seem to mistake the import of the word which I have marked with capitals. Richard does not mean, that because he is by shape and temper unfitted for a *courtier*, he is therefore determined to prove, in our sense of the word, a *wicked man*. The word in Shakspeare's time had not passed entirely into the modern sense; it was in its passage certainly, and indifferently used as such; the beauty of a world of words in that age was in their being less definite than they are now, fixed, and petrified. *Villain* is here undoubtedly used for a *churl* or *clown*, opposed to a *courtier*; and the incipient deterioration of the meaning gave the use

of it in this place great spirit and beauty. A *wicked man* does not necessarily hate *courtly pleasures*; a *clown* is naturally opposed to them. The mistake of this meaning has, I think, led the players into that hard literal conception with which they deliver this passage, quite foreign, in my understanding, to the bold gay-faced irony of the soliloquy. Richard, upon the stage, looks round, as if he were literally apprehensive of some dog snapping at him; and announces his determination of procuring a looking-glass, and employing a tailor, as if he were prepared to put both in practice before he should get home—I apprehend 'a world of figures here'.

Howell's Letters. 'The Treaty of the Match 'twixt our Prince [afterwards Charles I.] and the Lady Infanta, is now strongly afoot; she is a very comely Lady, *rather of a Flemish complexion than Spanish, fair hair'd*, and carrieth a most pure mixture of red and white in her Face. She is full and *big-lipp'd, which is held a Beauty rather than a Blemish or any Excess in the Austrian Family, it being a thing incident to most of that Race;* she goes now upon 16, and is of a tallness agreeable to those years.' This letter bears date, 5th Jan. 1622. Turn we now to a letter dated 16th May, 1626. The wind was now changed about, the Spanish match broken off, and Charles had become the husband of Henrietta. 'I thank you for your late Letter, and the several good Tidings sent me from Wales. In requital I can send you gallant news, for we have now a most Noble new Queen of England, who in true Beauty is beyond the Long-woo'd Infanta; for she was of a *fading Flaxen-hair, Big-lipp'd*, and somewhat Heavy-eyed; but this Daughter of France, this youngest Branch of Bourbon (being but in her Cradle when the Great Henry her Father was put out of the World) is of a more *lovely and lasting Complexion*, a dark brown; she hath Eyes that sparkle like Stars; and for her Physiognomy, she may be said to be a Mirror of Perfection.' He hath a rich account, in another letter, of Prince Charles courting this same Infanta. 'There are Comedians once a week come to the Palace [at Madrid], where under a great Canopy, the Queen and the Infanta sit in the middle, our Prince and Don Carlos on the Queen's

right hand, the king and the little Cardinal on the Infanta's left hand. I have seen the Prince have his eyes immovably fixed upon the Infanta half an hour together in a thoughtful speculative posture, *which sure would needs be tedious, unless affection did sweeten it.*' Again, of the Prince's final departure from that court. 'The king and his two Brothers accompanied his Highness to the Escurial some twenty miles off, and would have brought him to the Sea-side, but that the Queen is big, and hath not many days to go. When the king and he parted, there past wonderful great Endearments and Embraces *in divers postures* between them a long time ; and in that place there is a Pillar to be erected as a monument to Posterity.' This scene of royal congées assuredly gave rise to the popular, or reformed sign (as Ben Jonson calls it), of *The Salutation.* In the days of Popery, this sign had a more solemn import.

THE CHOICE OF A GRAVE

[This and the following piece were printed in *The London Magazine,* vol. vii, pp. 95, 97 (Jan. 1823), under the department entitled *The Miscellany.* First identified and reprinted in Mr. Bertram Dobell's *Sidelights,* &c., 1903.]

In Fontenelle's Dialogues of the Dead, Mary Stuart meets Rizzio, and by way of reconciling him to the violence he had suffered, says to him, 'I have honoured thy memory so far as to place thee in the tomb of the Kings of Scotland.' 'How,' says the musician, 'my body entombed among the Scottish Kings?' 'Nothing more true,' replies the queen. 'And I,' says Rizzio, 'I have been so little sensible of that good fortune, that, believe me, this is the first notice I ever had of it.'

I have no sympathy with that feeling, which is now-a-days so much in fashion, for picking out snug spots to be buried in. What is the meaning of such fancies? No man thinks or says, that it will be agreeable to his dead body to be resolved into dust under a willow, or with flowers above it. No—it is, that while alive he has pleasure in such anticipations for his coxcomical clay. I do not understand it—there is no *quid pro quo* in the business to my apprehension. It will not do to reason upon of course ; but I can't feel

about it. I am to blame, I dare say—but I can only laugh at such under-ground whims. 'A good place' in the church-yard!—the boxes!—a front row! but why? No, I cannot understand it: I cannot feel *particular* on such a subject: any part for me, as a plain man says of a partridge.

WILKS

It is very pleasing to discover redeeming points in characters that have been held up to our detestation. The merest trifles are enough, if they taste but of common humanity. I have never thought very ill of Wilks since I discovered that he was exceedingly fond of South-Down mutton. But better than this: 'My cherries', he says, 'are the prey of the blackbirds—and they are most welcome.' This is a little trait of character, which, in my mind, covers a multitude of sins.

MILTON

[Printed along with the following piece in *The London Magazine*, vol. vii, p. 218 (Feb. 1823), under *The Miscellany*. First identified and reprinted in Mr. B. Dobell's *Sidelights*, &c., 1903.]

Milton takes his rank in English literature, according to the station which has been determined on by the critics. But he is not read like Lord Byron, or Mr. Thomas Moore. He is not *popular;* nor perhaps will he ever be. He is known as the Author of 'Paradise Lost'; but his 'Paradise Regained', 'severe and beautiful,' is little known. Who knows his Arcades? or Samson Agonistes? or half his minor poems? We are persuaded that, however they may be spoken of with respect, few persons take the trouble to read them. Even Comus, the child of his youth, his 'florid son, young' Comus—is not well known; and for the little renown he may possess, he is indebted to the stage. The following lines (*excepting only the first four*) are not printed in the common editions of Milton; nor are they generally known to belong to that divine 'Masque'; yet they are in the poet's highest style. We are happy to bring them before such of our readers as are not possessed of Mr. Todd's expensive edition of Milton.

The Spirit Enters.

Before the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aërial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Amidst th' Hesperian gardens, on whose banks
Bedew'd with nectar and celestial songs,
Eternal roses grow, and hyacinth,
And fruits of golden rind, on whose fair tree
The scaly harness'd dragon ever keeps
His unenchanted eye: around the verge
And sacred limits of this blissful isle,
The jealous ocean, that old river, winds
His far-extended arms, till with steep fall
Half his waste flood the wild Atlantic fills,
And half the slow unfathom'd Stygian pool.
But soft, I was not sent to court your wonder
With distant worlds, and strange removed climes.
Yet thence I come, and oft from thence behold, &c.

Our readers will forgive us for having modernized the spelling. It is the only liberty that we have taken with our great author's magnificent passage.

A CHECK TO HUMAN PRIDE

It is rather an unpleasant fact, that the ugliest and awkwardest of brute animals have the greatest resemblance to man: the monkey and the bear. The monkey is ugly too, (so we think,) because he is like man—as the bear is awkward, because the cumbrous action of its huge paws seems to be a preposterous imitation of the motions of the human hands. Men and apes are the only animals that have hairs on the under eye-lid. Let kings know this.

LETTER TO AN OLD GENTLEMAN WHOSE EDUCATION HAS BEEN NEGLECTED

To the Editor of the London Magazine

[Printed in *The London Magazine, New Series,* vol. i, p. 95 (Jan. 1825). First collected in *Elia.* Second Series. Philadelphia: 1828.]

Dear Sir,—I send you a bantering Epistle to an Old Gentleman whose Education is supposed to have been

Neglected. Of course, it was *suggested* by some Letters of your admirable Opium-Eater; the discontinuance of which has caused so much regret to myself in common with most of your readers. You will do me injustice by supposing, that in the remotest degree it was my intention to ridicule those Papers. The fact is, the most serious things may give rise to an innocent burlesque; and the more serious they are, the fitter they become for that purpose. It is not to be supposed, that Charles Cotton did not entertain a very high regard for Virgil, notwithstanding he travestied that Poet. Yourself can testify the deep respect I have always held for the profound learning and penetrating genius of our friend. Nothing upon earth would give me greater pleasure than to find that he has not lost sight of his entertaining and instructive purpose.

I am, dear Sir, yours and *his* sincerely,

ELIA.

MY DEAR SIR,—The question which you have done me the honour to propose to me, through the medium of our common friend Mr. Grierson, I shall endeavour to answer with as much exactness as a limited observation and experience can warrant.

You ask—or rather, Mr. Grierson in his own interesting language asks for you—'Whether a person at the age of sixty-three, with no more proficiency than a tolerable knowledge of most of the characters of the English alphabet at first sight amounts to, by dint of persevering application, and good masters,—a docile and ingenuous disposition on the part of the pupil always pre-supposed—may hope to arrive, within a presumable number of years, at that degree of attainments, which shall entitle the possessor to the character, which you are on so many accounts justly desirous of acquiring, of a *learned man*.'

This is fairly and candidly stated,—only I could wish that on one point you had been a little more explicit. In the mean time, I will take it for granted, that by a 'knowledge of the alphabetic characters', you confine your meaning to the single powers only, as you are silent on the subject of the diphthongs, and harder combinations.

Why truly, Sir, when I consider the vast circle of sciences

—it is not here worth while to trouble you with the distinction between learning and science—which a man must be understood to have made the tour of in these days, before the world will be willing to concede to him the title which you aspire to, I am almost disposed to reply to your inquiry by a direct answer in the negative.

However, where all cannot be compassed, a great deal that is truly valuable may be accomplished. I am unwilling to throw out any remarks that should have a tendency to damp a hopeful genius ; but I must not in fairness conceal from you, that you have much to do. The consciousness of difficulty is sometimes a spur to exertion. Rome—or rather, my dear Sir, to borrow an illustration from a place, as yet more familiar to you—Rumford—Rumford—was not built in a day.

Your mind as yet, give me leave to tell you, is in the state of a sheet of white paper. We must not blot or blur it over too hastily. Or, to use an opposite simile, it is like a piece of parchment all be-scrawled and be-scribbled over with characters of no sense or import, which we must carefully erase and remove, before we can make way for the authentic characters or impresses, which are to be substituted in their stead by the corrective hand of science.

Your mind, my dear Sir, again resembles that same parchment, which we will suppose a little hardened by time and disuse. We may apply the characters, but are we sure that the ink will sink ?

You are in the condition of a traveller, that has all his journey to begin. And again, you are worse off than the traveller which I have supposed—for you have already lost your way.

You have much to learn, which you have never been taught ; and more, I fear, to unlearn, which you have been taught erroneously. You have hitherto, I dare say, imagined, that the sun moves round the earth. When you shall have mastered the true solar system, you will have quite a different theory upon that point, I assure you. I mention but this instance. Your own experience, as knowledge advances, will furnish you with many parallels.

I can scarcely approve of the intention, which Mr. Grierson informs me you had contemplated, of entering yourself at a common seminary, and working your way up from the lower to the higher forms with the children. I see more to admire in the modesty, than in the expediency, of such a resolution. I own I cannot reconcile myself to the spectacle of a gentleman at your time of life seated, as must be your case at first, below a Tyro of four or five—for at that early age the rudiments of education usually commence in this country. I doubt whether more might not be lost in the point of fitness, than would be gained in the advantages which you propose to yourself by this scheme.

You say, you stand in need of emulation; that this incitement is no where to be had but at a public school; that you should be more sensible of your progress by comparing it with the daily progress of those around you. But have you considered the nature of emulation; and how it is sustained at those tender years, which you would have to come in competition with? I am afraid you are dreaming of academic prizes and distinctions. Alas! in the university, for which you are preparing, the highest medal would be a silver penny, and you must graduate in nuts and oranges.

I know that Peter, the Great Czar—or Emperor—of Muscovy, submitted himself to the discipline of a dock-yard at Deptford, that he might learn, and convey to his countrymen, the noble art of shipbuilding. You are old enough to remember him, or at least to talk about him. I call to mind also other great princes, who, to instruct themselves in the theory and practice of war, and set an example of subordination to their subjects, have condescended to enrol themselves as private soldiers; and, passing through the successive ranks of corporal, quarter-master, and the rest, have served their way up to the station, at which most princes are willing enough to set out—of General and Commander-in-Chief over their own forces. But—besides that there is oftentimes great sham and pretence in their show of mock humility—the competition which they stooped to was with their co-evals, however inferior to them in birth. Between ages so very

disparate, as those which you contemplate, I fear there can no salutary emulation subsist.

Again, in the other alternative, could you submit to the ordinary reproofs and discipline of a day-school? Could you bear to be corrected for your faults? Or how would it look to see you put to stand, as must be the case sometimes, in a corner?

I am afraid the idea of a public school in your circumstances must be given up.

But is it impossible, my dear Sir, to find some person of your own age—if of the other sex, the more agreeable perhaps—whose information, like your own, has rather lagged behind their years, who should be willing to set out from the same point with yourself, to undergo the same tasks—thus at once inciting and sweetening each other's labours in a sort of friendly rivalry. Such a one, I think, it would not be difficult to find in some of the western parts of this island—about Dartmoor for instance.

Or what if, from your own estate—that estate which, unexpectedly acquired so late in life, has inspired into you this generous thirst after knowledge, you were to select some elderly peasant, that might best be spared from the land; to come and begin his education with you, that you might till, as it were, your minds together—one, whose heavier progress might invite, without a fear of discouraging, your emulation? We might then see—starting from an equal post—the difference of the clownish and the gentle blood.

A private education then, or such a one as I have been describing, being determined on, we must in the next place look out for a preceptor:—for it will be some time before either of you, left to yourselves, will be able to assist the other to any great purpose in his studies.

And now, my dear Sir, if in describing such a tutor as I have imagined for you, I use a style a little above the familiar one in which I have hitherto chosen to address you, the nature of the subject must be my apology. *Difficile est de scientiis inscienter loqui*, which is as much as to say that 'in treating of scientific matters it is difficult to avoid the use of scientific terms'. But I shall endeavour to be as plain as possible. I am not going to present you with the *ideal* of a pedagogue, as it may exist in my fancy, or

has possibly been realized in the persons of Buchanan and Busby. Something less than perfection will serve our turn. The scheme which I propose in this first or introductory letter has reference to the first four or five years of your education only; and in enumerating the qualifications of him that should undertake the direction of your studies, I shall rather point out the *minimum*, or *least*, that I shall require of him, than trouble you in the search of attainments neither common nor necessary to our immediate purpose.

He should be a man of deep and extensive knowledge. So much at least is indispensable. Something older than yourself, I could wish him, because years add reverence.

To his age and great learning, he should be blest with a temper and a patience, willing to accommodate itself to the imperfections of the slowest and meanest capacities. Such a one in former days Mr. Hartlib appears to have been, and such in our days I take Mr. Grierson to be; but our friend, you know, unhappily has other engagements. I do not demand a consummate grammarian; but he must be a thorough master of vernacular orthography, with an insight into the accentualities and punctualities of modern Saxon, or English. He must be competently instructed (or how shall he instruct you?) in the tetralogy, or first four rules, upon which not only arithmetic, but geometry, and the pure mathematics themselves, are grounded. I do not require that he should have measured the globe with Cook, or Ortelius, but it is desirable that he should have a general knowledge (I do not mean a very nice or pedantic one) of the great division of the earth into four parts, so as to teach you readily to name the quarters. He must have a genius capable in some degree of soaring to the upper element, to deduce from thence the not much dissimilar computation of the cardinal points, or hinges, upon which those invisible phenomena, which naturalists agree to term *winds*, do perpetually shift and turn. He must instruct you, in imitation of the old Orphic fragments (the mention of which has possibly escaped you), in numeric and harmonious responses, to deliver the number of solar revolutions, within which each of the twelve periods, into which the *Annus Vulgaris*, or common year, is divided,

doth usually complete and terminate itself. The intercalaries, and other subtle problems, he will do well to omit, till riper years, and course of study, shall have rendered you more capable thereof. He must be capable of embracing all history, so as from the countless myriads of individual men, who have peopled this globe of earth—*for it is a globe*—by comparison of their respective births, lives, deaths, fortunes, conduct, prowess, &c. to pronounce, and teach you to pronounce, dogmatically and catechetically, who was the richest, who was the strongest, who was the wisest, who was the meekest man, that ever lived; to the facilitation of which solution, you will readily conceive a smattering of biography would in no inconsiderable degree conduce. Leaving the dialects of men (in one of which I shall take leave to suppose you by this time at least superficially instituted), you will learn to ascend with him to the contemplation of that unarticulated language, which was before the written tongue; and, with the aid of the elder Phrygian or Æsopic key, to interpret the sounds by which the animal tribes communicate their minds—evolving moral instruction with delight from the dialogue of cooks, dogs, and foxes. Or marrying theology with verse, from whose mixture a beautiful and healthy offspring may be expected, in your own native accents (but purified) you will keep time together to the profound harpings of the more modern or Wattsian hymnics.

Thus far I have ventured to conduct you to a 'hill-side, whence you may discern the right path of a virtuous and noble education; laborious indeed at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospects and melodious sounds on every side, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming.' [a]

With my best respects to Mr. Grierson, when you see him,

I remain, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

ELIA.[1]

April 1, 1823.

[a] Milton's Tractate on Education, addressed to Mr. Hartlib.

[1] *See Editor's Notes.*

RITSON *VERSUS* JOHN SCOTT THE QUAKER

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. vii, p. 445, April, 1823. First collected in *The Complete Correspondence*, &c., Moxon, 1868–70.]

> Critics I read on other men,
> And Hypers upon them again.—*Prior.*

I HAVE in my possession Scott's 'Critical Essays on some of the Poems of several English Poets',—a handsome octavo, bought at the sale of Ritson's books; and enriched (or deformed, as some would think it) with MS. annotations in the handwriting of that redoubted Censor. I shall transcribe a few, which seem most characteristic of both the writers—Scott, feeble, but amiable—Ritson, coarse, caustic, clever; and, I am to suppose, not amiable. But they have proved some amusement to me; and, I hope, will produce some to the reader, this rainy season, which really damps a gentleman's wings for any original flight, and obliges him to ransack his shelves, and miscellaneous reading, to furnish an occasional or make-shift paper. If the sky clears up, and the sun dances this Easter (as they say he is wont to do), the town may be troubled with something more in his own way the ensuing month from its poor servant to command.

ELIA.

DYER'S RUINS OF ROME

> ——The pilgrim oft
> At dead of night 'mid his oraison hears
> Aghast the voice of time disparting towers,
> Tumbling all precipitate down-dash'd,
> Rattling around, loud-thund'ring to the moon;
> While murmurs sooth each awful interval
> Of ever-falling waters.

Scott.—There is a very bold transposition in this passage. A superficial reader, not attending to the sense of the epithet *ever*, might be ready to suppose that the *intervals* intended were those between the *falling of the waters*, instead of those between the *falling of the towers*.

Ritson.—A beauty, as in Thomson's Winter—

——Cheerless towns, far distant, never blest,
Save when its annual course the caravan
Bends to the golden coast of rich Cathay,
With news of human kind.[a]

A superficial person—Mr. Scott, for instance, would be apt to connect the last clause in this period with the line foregoing—'bends to the coast of Cathay with news', &c. But has a reader nothing to do but to sit passive, while the connexion is to glide into his ears like oil?

DENHAM'S COOPER'S HILL

The stream is so transparent, pure, and clear,
That, had the self-enamour'd youth gaz'd here,
So fatally deceived he had not been,
While he the bottom, not his face had seen.

Scott.—The last two lines have more music than Denham's can possibly boast.

Ritson.—May I have leave to conjecture, that in the very last line of all, the word 'the' has erroneously crept in? I am persuaded that the poet wrote 'his'. To my mind, at least, this reading, in a surprising degree, heightens the idea of the extreme clearness and transparency of the stream, where a man might see *more than his face* (as it were) in it.

COLLINS'S ORIENTAL ECLOGUES

Scott.—The second of these little pieces, called Hassan, or the Camel Driver, is of superior character. This poem contradicts history in one principal instance; the merchants of the east travel in numerous caravans, but Hassan is introduced travelling alone in the desart. But this circumstance detracts little from our author's merit; adherence to historical fact is *seldom* required in poetry.

Ritson.—It is *always*, where the poet unnecessarily transports you to the ends of the world. If he must plague you with exotic scenery, you have a right to exact strict local imagery and costume. Why must I learn Arabic, to read nothing after all but Gay's Fables in another language?

[a] May I have leave to notice an instance of the same agreeable discontinuity in my friend Lloyd's admirable poem on Christmas?

——Where the broad-bosom'd hills,
Swept with perpetual clouds, of Scotland rise,
Me fate compels to tarry.

Scott.—Abra is introduced in a grove, wreathing a flowery chaplet for her hair. Shakspeare himself could not have devised a more natural and pleasing incident, than that of the monarch's attention being attracted by her song:

> Great Abbas chanced that fated morn to stray,
> By love conducted from the chace away.
> Among the vocal vales he heard her song——

Ritson.—Ch—t?

> O stay thee, Agib, for my feet deny,
> No longer friendly to my life, to fly——

Scott.—From the pen of Cowley, such an observation as Secander's, 'that his feet were no longer friendly to his life,' might have been expected; but Collins rarely committed such violations of simplicity.

Ritson.—Pen of Cowley! impudent goose-quill, how darest thou guess what Cowley would have written?

GRAY'S CHURCH-YARD ELEGY

> Save where the beetle wheels——

Scott.—The beetle was introduced in poetry by Shakspeare * * *. Shakspeare has made the most of his description; indeed, far too much, considering the occasion:

> ——to black Hecate's summons
> The shard-born beetle with his drowsy hum
> Hath rung night's yawning peal.——

The imagination must be indeed fertile, which could produce this ill-placed exuberance of imagery. The poet, when composing this passage, must have had in his mind all the remote ideas of Hecate, a heathen Goddess, of a beetle, of night, of a peal of bells, and of that action of the muscles, commonly called a gape or yawn.

Ritson.—Numbscull! that would limit an infinite head by the square contents of thy own numbscull.

Scott.—The great merit of a poet is not, like Cowley, Donne, and Denham, to say what no man but himself has thought, but what every man besides himself has thought; but no man expressed, or, at least, expressed so well.

Ritson.—In other words, all *that* is poetry, which Mr. Scott has thought, as well as the poet; but *that* cannot be

poetry, which was not obvious to Mr. Scott, as well as to Cowley, Donne, and Denham.

Scott.—Mr. Mason observes of the language in this part [the Epitaph], that it has a Doric delicacy. It has, indeed, what I should rather term a *happy rusticity.*

Ritson.—

> Come, see
> Rural felicity.

GOLDSMITH'S DESERTED VILLAGE

> No busy steps the grass-grown footway tread,
> But all the bloomy flush of life is fled—
> All but yon widow'd solitary thing,
> That feebly bends beside the plashy spring;
> She, wretched matron, forced, in age, for bread,
> To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,

Scott.—Our author's language, in this place, is very defective in correctness. After mentioning the general privation of the 'bloomy flush of life', the exceptionary 'all but' includes, as part of that 'bloomy flush', an aged decrepit matron; that is to say, in plain prose, 'the bloomy flush of life is all fled but one old woman.'

Ritson.—Yet Milton could write:

> Far from all resort of mirth,
> Save the cricket on the hearth,
> Or the bell-man's drowsy charm—

and I dare say he was right. O never let a quaker, or a woman, try their hand at being witty, any more than a Tom Brown affect to speak by the spirit!

Scott.——Aaron Hill, who, although, in general, a bombastic writer, produced some pieces of merit, particularly the Caveat, an allegorical satire on Pope.

Ritson.—Say rather his verses on John Dennis, beginning 'Adieu, unsocial excellence!' which are implicitly a finer satire on Pope than twenty Caveats. All that Pope could or did say against Dennis, is there condensed; and what he should have said, and did not, for him, is there too.[a]

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[a] ON THE DEATH OF MR. DENNIS

> Adieu, unsocial excellence! at last
> Thy foes are vanquish'd, and thy fears are past:

THOMSON'S SEASONS

Address to the Angler to spare the young fish

If yet too young, and easily deceived,
A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod,
Him, piteous of his youth, and the short space
He has enjoy'd the vital light of heaven,
Soft disengage, and back into the stream
The speckled infant throw.——

Scott.—The praise bestowed on a preceding passage, cannot be justly given to this. There is in it an attempt at dignity above the occasion. Pathos seems to have been intended, but affectation only is produced.

Ritson.—It is not affectation, but it is the mock heroic of pathos, introduced purposely and wisely to attract the reader to a proposal, which from the unimportance of the subject—a poor little fish—might else have escaped his attention—as children learn, or may learn, humanity to animals from the mock romantic 'Perambulations of a Mouse'.

Want, the grim recompense of truth like thine,
Shall now no longer dim thy destined shrine.
The impatient envy, the disdainful air,
The front malignant, and the captious stare,
The furious petulance, the jealous start,
The mist of frailties that obscured thy heart—
Veil'd in thy grave shall unremember'd lie;
For these were parts of Dennis born to die.
But there's a nobler deity behind;
His reason dies not, and has friends to find:
Though here revenge and pride withheld his praise,
No wrongs shall reach him through his future days;
The rising ages shall redeem his name,
And nations read him into lasting fame.
In his defects untaught, his labour'd page
Shall the slow gratitude of Time engage.
Perhaps some story of his pitied woe,
Mix'd in faint shades, may with his memory go,
To touch fraternity with generous shame,
And backward cast an unavailing blame
On times too cold to taste his strength of art,
Yet warm contemners of too weak a heart.
Rest in thy dust, contented with thy lot,
Thy good remember'd, and thy bad forgot.

* * * * * * *

HAYMAKING

——Infant hands
Trail the long rake; or, with the fragrant load
O'er-charged, amid the kind oppression roll.

Scott.—'Kind oppression' is a phrase of that sort, which one scarcely knows whether to blame or praise: it consists of two words, directly opposite in their signification; and yet, perhaps, no phrase whatever could have better conveyed the idea of an easy uninjurious weight—

Ritson.—and yet he does not know whether to blame or praise it!

SHEEP-SHEARING

——By many a dog
Compell'd——
* * * * * *
The clamour much of men, and boys, and dogs——
* * * * * * * * *

Scott.—The mention of *dogs* twice was superfluous; it might have been easily avoided.

Ritson.—Very true—by mentioning them only once.

Scott.—Nature is rich in a variety of minute but striking circumstances; some of which engage the attention of one observer, and some that of another.

Ritson.—This lover of truth never uttered a truer speech. Give me a lie with a spirit in it.

Air, earth, and ocean, smile immense.——

Scott.—The bombastic 'immense smile of air, &c.', better omitted.

Ritson.—Quite Miltonic—'enormous bliss'—and both, I presume, alike *caviare* to the Quaker.

He comes! he comes! in every breeze the power
Of philosophic melancholy comes!
His near approach, the sudden-starting tear,
The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air,
The soften'd feature, and the beating heart,
Pierced deep with many a virtuous pang, declare.

Scott.—This fine picture is greatly injured by a few words. The power should have been said to come 'upon the

breeze'; not 'in every breeze'; an expression which indicates a multiplicity of approaches. If he came 'in every breeze', he must have been always coming—

Ritson.—and so he was.

———The branching Oronoque
Rolls a brown deluge, and the native drives
To dwell aloft on life-sufficing trees,
At once his dome, his robe, his food, and arms.
Swell'd by a thousand streams, impetuous hurl'd
From all the roaring Andes, huge descends
The mighty Orellana. *Scarce the Muse*
Dares stretch her wing o'er this enormous mass
Of rushing water: *scarce she dares attempt*
The sea-like Plata; to whose dread expanse,
Continuous depth, and wond'rous length of course,
Our floods are rills. With unabated force
In silent dignity they sweep along,
And traverse realms unknown, and blooming wilds,
And fruitful desarts, worlds of solitude,
Where the sun smiles, and seasons teem, in vain,
Unseen and unenjoy'd. Forsaking these,
O'er peopled plains they fair-diffusive flow,
And many a nation feed, and circle safe
In their fair bosom many a happy isle,
The seat of blameless Pan, yet undisturb'd
By Christian crimes, and Europe's cruel sons.
Thus pouring on, they proudly seek the deep,
Whose vanquish'd tide, recoiling from the shock,
Yields to this liquid weight of half the globe,
And Ocean trembles for his green domain.

Scott.—Poets not unfrequently aim at aggrandising their subject, by avowing their inability to describe it. This is a puerile and inadequate expedient. Thomson has here, perhaps inadvertently, descended to this feeble art of exaggeration.

Ritson.—A magnificent passage, in spite of Duns Scotus! The poet says not a word about his 'inability to describe' nor seems to be thinking about his readers at all. He is confessing his own feelings, awe-struck with the contemplation of such o'erwhelming objects; in the same spirit with which he designates the den of the 'green serpent' in another place—

—Which ev'n imagination fears to tread——

——A dazzling deluge reigns, and all
From pole to pole is undistinguish'd blaze.——

Scott.—From pole to pole, strictly speaking, is improper. *The poet* meant, 'from one part of the horizon to the other.'

Ritson.—From *his* pole to *thy* pole was a more downward declension than 'from the centre thrice', &c.

Ohe! jam satis.

LETTER OF ELIA TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQUIRE

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. viii, p. 400 (Oct. 1823). Lamb rewrote the antepenultimate paragraph, and reprinted it with the last two in *Elia: Last Essays*, 1833, under the title *The Tombs in The Abbey.*]

Sir,—You have done me an unfriendly office, without perhaps much considering what you were doing. You have given an ill name to my poor Lucubrations. In a recent Paper on Infidelity, you usher in a conditional commendation of them with an exception; which, preceding the encomium, and taking up nearly the same space with it, must impress your readers with the notion, that the objectionable parts in them are at least equal in quantity to the pardonable. The censure is in fact the criticism; the praise—a concession merely. Exceptions usually follow, to qualify praise or blame. But there stands your reproof, in the very front of your notice, in ugly characters, like some bugbear, to frighten all good Christians from purchasing. Through you I am become an object of suspicion to preceptors of youth, and fathers of families. '*A book, which wants only a sounder religious feeling to be as delightful as it is original.*' With no further explanation, what must your readers conjecture, but that my little volume is some vehicle for heresy or infidelity? The quotation, which you honour me by subjoining, oddly enough, is of a character, which bespeaks a temperament in the writer the very reverse of *that* your reproof goes to insinuate. Had you been taxing me with superstition, the passage would have been pertinent to the censure. Was it worth your while to go so far out of your way to affront the feelings of an old friend, and commit yourself by an irrelevant quotation, for the pleasure of reflecting upon a poor child, an exile at Genoa?

I am at a loss what particular Essay you had in view (if my poor ramblings amount to that appellation) when you were in such a hurry to thrust in your objection, like bad news, foremost.—Perhaps the Paper on 'Saying Graces' was the obnoxious feature. I have endeavoured there to rescue a voluntary duty—good in place, but never, as I remember, literally commanded—from the charge of an undecent formality. Rightly taken, Sir, that Paper was not against Graces, but Want of Grace; not against the ceremony, but the carelessness and slovenliness so often observed in the performance of it.

Or was it *that* on the 'New Year'—in which I have described the feelings of the merely natural man, on a consideration of the amazing change, which is supposable to take place on our removal from this fleshly scene?—If men would honestly confess their misgivings (which few men will) there are times when the strongest Christians of us, I believe, have reeled under questionings of such staggering obscurity. I do not accuse you of this weakness. There are some who tremblingly reach out shaking hands to the guidance of Faith—Others who stoutly venture into the dark (their Human Confidence their leader, whom they mistake for Faith); and, investing themselves beforehand with Cherubic wings, as they fancy, find their new robes as familiar, and fitting to their supposed growth and stature in godliness, as the coat they left off yesterday—Some whose hope totters upon crutches—Others who stalk into futurity upon stilts.

The contemplation of a spiritual World,—which, without the addition of a misgiving conscience, is enough to shake some natures to their foundation—is smoothly got over by others, who shall float over the black billows, in their little boat of No-Distrust, as unconcernedly as over a summer sea. The difference is chiefly constitutional.

One man shall love his friends and his friends' faces; and, under the uncertainty of conversing with them again, in the same manner and familiar circumstances of sight, speech, &c., as upon earth—in a moment of no irreverent weakness—for a dream-while—no more—would be almost content, for a reward of a life of virtue (if he could ascribe such acceptance to his lame performances), to take up his

portion with those he loved, and was made to love, in this good world, which he knows—which was created so lovely, beyond his deservings. Another, embracing a more exalted vision—so that he might receive indefinite additaments of power, knowledge, beauty, glory, &c.—is ready to forego the recognition of humbler individualities of earth, and the old familiar faces. The shapings of our heavens are the modifications of our constitution ; and Mr. Feeble Mind, or Mr. Great Heart, is born in every one of us.

Some (and such have been accounted the safest divines) have shrunk from pronouncing upon the final state of any man ; nor dare they pronounce the case of Judas to be desperate. Others (with stronger optics), as plainly as with the eye of flesh, shall behold a *given king* in bliss, and a *given chamberlain* in torment ; even to the eternising of a cast of the eye in the latter, his own self-mocked and good-humouredly-borne deformity on earth, but supposed to aggravate the uncouth and hideous expression of his pangs in the other place. That one man can presume so far, and that another would with shuddering disclaim such confidences, is, I believe, an effect of the nerves purely.

If in either of these Papers, or elsewhere, I have been betrayed into some levities—not affronting the sanctuary, but glancing perhaps at some of the out-skirts and extreme edges, the debateable land between the holy and the profane regions—(for the admixture of man's inventions twisting themselves with the name of religion itself, has artfully made it difficult to touch even the alloy, without, in some men's estimation, soiling the fine gold)—if I have sported within the purlieus of serious matter—it was, I dare say, a humour—be not startled, Sir—which I have unwittingly derived from yourself. You have all your life been making a jest of the Devil. Not of the scriptural meaning of that dark essence—personal or allegorical ; for the nature is no where plainly delivered. I acquit you of intentional irreverence. But indeed you have made wonderfully free with, and been mighty pleasant upon, the popular idea and attributes of him. A noble Lord, your brother Visionary, has scarcely taken greater liberties with the material keys, and merely Catholic notion of St. Peter.—You have flattered him in prose : you have chanted him

in goodly odes. You have been his Jester; Volunteer Laureat, and self-elected Court Poet to Beëlzebub.

You have never ridiculed, I believe, what you thought to be religion, but you are always girding at what some pious, but perhaps mistaken folks, think to be so. For this reason I am sorry to hear, that you are engaged upon a life of George Fox. I know you will fall into the error of intermixing some comic stuff with your seriousness. The Quakers tremble at the subject in your hand. The Methodists are shy of you, upon account of *their* founder. But, above all, our Popish brethren are most in your debt. The errors of that church have proved a fruitful source to your scoffing vein. Their Legend has been a golden one to you. And here, your friends, Sir, have noticed a notable inconsistency. To the imposing rites, the solemn penances, devout austerities of that communion; the affecting though erring piety of their hermits; the silence and solitude of the Chartreux—their crossings, their holy waters—their Virgin, and their saints—to these, they say, you have been indebted for the best feelings, and the richest imagery, of your Epic poetry. You have drawn copious drafts upon Loretto. We thought at one time you were going post to Rome—but that in the facetious commentaries, which it is your custom to append so plentifully, and (some say) injudiciously, to your loftiest performances in this kind, you spurn the uplifted toe, which you but just now seemed to court; leave his holiness in the lurch; and show him a fair pair of Protestant heels under your Romish vestment. When we think you already at the wicket, suddenly a violent cross wind blows you transverse—

> ten thousand leagues awry.
> Then might we see
> Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost
> And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
> Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
> The sport of winds.

You pick up pence by showing the hallowed bones, shrine, and crucifix; and you take money a second time by exposing the trick of them afterwards. You carry your verse to Castle Angelo for sale in a morning; and, swifter than a pedlar can transmute his pack, you are at Canterbury with your prose ware before night.

Sir, is it that I dislike you in this merry vein? The very reverse. No countenance becomes an intelligent jest better than your own. It is your grave aspect, when you look awful upon your poor friends, which I would deprecate.

In more than one place, if I mistake not, you have been pleased to compliment me at the expence of my companions. I cannot accept your compliment at such a price. The upbraiding a man's poverty naturally makes him look about him, to see whether he be so poor indeed as he is presumed to be. You have put me upon counting my riches. Really, Sir, I did not know I was so wealthy in the article of friendships. There is ——, and ——, whom you never heard of, but exemplary characters both, and excellent church-goers; and N., mine and my father's friend for nearly half a century; and the enthusiast for Wordsworth's poetry, T. N. T., a little tainted with Socinianism, it is to be feared, but constant in his attachments, and a capital critic; and ——, a sturdy old Athanasian, so that sets all to rights again; and W., the light, and warm-as-light hearted, Janus of the London; and the translator of Dante, still a curate, modest and amiable C.; and Allan C., the large-hearted Scot; and P——r, candid and affectionate as his own poetry; and A——p, Coleridge's friend; and G——n, his more than friend; and Coleridge himself, the same to me still, as in those old evenings, when we used to sit and speculate (do you remember them, Sir?) at our old Salutation tavern, upon Pantisocracy and golden days to come on earth; and W——th (why, Sir, I might drop my rent-roll here; such goodly farms and manors have I reckoned up already. In what possessions has not this last name alone estated me! —but I will go on)—and M., the noble-minded kinsman, by wedlock, of W——th; and H. C. R., unwearied in the offices of a friend; and Clarkson, almost above the narrowness of that relation, yet condescending not seldom heretofore from the labours of his world-embracing charity to bless my humble roof; and the gall-less and single-minded Dyer; and the high-minded associate of Cook, the veteran Colonel, with his lusty heart still sending cartels of defiance to old Time; and, not least, W. A., the last and steadiest left to me of that little knot of whist-players, that used

to assemble weekly, for so many years, at the Queen's Gate (you remember them, Sir?) and called Admiral Burney friend.

I will come to the point at once. I believe you will not make many exceptions to my associates so far. But I have purposely omitted some intimacies, which I do not yet repent of having contracted, with two gentlemen, diametrically opposed to yourself in principles. You will understand me to allude to the authors of Rimini and of the Table Talk. And first, of the former.——

It is an error more particularly incident to persons of the correctest principles and habits, to seclude themselves from the rest of mankind, as from another species; and form into knots and clubs. The best people, herding thus exclusively, are in danger of contracting a narrowness. Heat and cold, dryness and moisture, in the natural world, do not fly asunder, to split the globe into sectarian parts and separations; but mingling, as they best may, correct the malignity of any single predominance. The analogy holds, I suppose, in the moral world. If all the good people were to ship themselves off to Terra Incognitas, what, in humanity's name, is to become of the refuse? If the persons, whom I chiefly have in view, have not pushed matters to this extremity yet, they carry them as far as they can go. Instead of mixing with the infidel and the freethinker—in the room of opening a negociation, to try at least to find out at which gate the error entered—they huddle close together, in a weak fear of infection, like that pusillanimous underling in Spenser—

> This is the wandering wood, this Error's den;
> A monster vile, whom God and man does hate:
> Therefore, I reed, beware. Fly, fly, quoth then
> The fearful Dwarf,

and, if they be writers in orthodox journals—addressing themselves only to the irritable passions of the unbeliever—they proceed in a safe system of strengthening the strong hands, and confirming the valiant knees; of converting the already converted, and proselyting their own party. I am the more convinced of this from a passage in the very Treatise which occasioned this letter. It is where, having recommended to the doubter the writings of

Michaelis and Lardner, you ride triumphant over the necks of all infidels, sceptics, and dissenters, from this time to the world's end, upon the wheels of two unanswerable deductions. I do not hold it meet to set down, in a Miscellaneous Compilation like this, such religious words as you have thought fit to introduce into the pages of a petulant Literary Journal. I therefore beg leave to substitute *numerals*, and refer to the Quarterly Review (for July) for filling of them up. 'Here,' say you, 'as in the history of 7, if these books are authentic, the events which they relate must be true; if they were written by 8, 9 is 10 and 11.' Your first deduction, if it means honestly, rests upon two identical propositions; though I suspect an unfairness in one of the terms, which this would not be quite the proper place for explicating. At all events *you* have no cause to triumph; you have not been proving the premises, but refer for satisfaction therein to very long and laborious works, which may well employ the sceptic a twelvemonth or two to digest, before he can possibly be ripe for your conclusion. When he has satisfied himself about the premises, he will concede to you the inference, I dare say, most readily.—But your latter deduction, *viz.* that because 8 has written a book concerning 9, therefore 10 and 11 was certainly his meaning, is one of the most extraordinary conclusions *per saltum* that I have had the good fortune to meet with. As far as 10 is verbally asserted in the writings, all sects must agree with you; but you cannot be ignorant of the many various ways in which the doctrine of the * * * * * * * * * has been understood, from a low figurative expression (with the Unitarians) up to the most mysterious actuality; in which highest sense alone you and your church take it. And for 11, that there is *no other possible conclusion*—to hazard this in the face of so many thousands of Arians and Socinians, &c., who have drawn so opposite a one, is such a piece of theological hardihood, as, I think, warrants me in concluding that, when you sit down to pen theology, you do not at all consider your opponents; but have in your eye, merely and exclusively, readers of the same way of thinking with yourself, and therefore have no occasion to trouble yourself, with the quality of the logic, to which you treat them.

Neither can I think, if you had had the welfare of the poor child—over whose hopeless condition you whine so lamentably and (I must think) unseasonably—seriously at heart, that you could have taken the step of sticking him up *by name*—T. H. is as good as *naming* him—to perpetuate an outrage upon the paternal feelings, as long as the Quarterly Review shall last.—Was it necessary to specify an individual case, and give to Christian compassion the appearance of personal attack? Is this the way to conciliate unbelievers, or not rather to widen the breach irreparably?

I own I could never think so considerably of myself as to decline the society of an agreeable or worthy man upon difference of opinion only. The impediments and the facilitations to a sound belief are various and inscrutable as the heart of man. Some believe upon weak principles. Others cannot feel the efficacy of the strongest. One of the most candid, most upright, and single-meaning men, I ever knew, was the late Thomas Holcroft. I believe he never said one thing and meant another, in his life; and, as near as I can guess, he never acted otherwise than with the most scrupulous attention to conscience. Ought we to wish the character false, for the sake of a hollow compliment to Christianity?

Accident introduced me to the acquaintance of Mr. L. H. —and the experience of his many friendly qualities confirmed a friendship between us. You, who have been misrepresented yourself, I should hope, have not lent an idle ear to the calumnies which have been spread abroad respecting this gentleman. I was admitted to his household for some years, and do most solemnly aver that I believe him to be in his domestic relations as correct as any man. He chose an ill-judged subject for a poem; the peccant humours of which have been visited on him tenfold by the artful use, which his adversaries have made, of an *equivocal term*. The subject itself was started by Dante, but better because brieflier treated of. But the crime of the Lovers, in the Italian and the English poet, with its aggravated enormity of circumstance, is not of a kind (as the critics of the latter well knew) with those conjunctions, for which Nature herself has provided no

excuse, because no temptation.—It has nothing in common with the black horrors, sung by Ford and Massinger. The familiarising of it in tale or fable may be for that reason incidentally more contagious. In spite of Rimini, I must look upon its author as a man of taste, and a poet. He is better than so, he is one of the most cordial-minded men I ever knew, and matchless as a fire-side companion. I mean not to affront or wound your feelings when I say that, in his more genial moods, he has often reminded me of you. There is the same air of mild dogmatism—the same condescending to a boyish sportiveness—in both your conversations. His hand-writing is so much the same with your own, that I have opened more than one letter of his, hoping, nay, not doubting, but it was from you, and have been disappointed (he will bear with my saying so) at the discovery of my error. L. H. is unfortunate in holding some loose and not very definite speculations (for at times I think he hardly knows whither his premises would carry him) on marriage—the tenets, I conceive, of the Political Justice, carried a little further. For any thing I could discover in his practice, they have reference, like those, to some future possible condition of society, and not to the present times. But neither for these obliquities of thinking (upon which my own conclusions are as distant as the poles asunder)—nor for his political asperities and petulancies, which are wearing out with the heats and vanities of youth —did I select him for a friend; but for qualities which fitted him for that relation. I do not know whether I flatter myself with being the occasion, but certain it is, that, touched with some misgivings for sundry harsh things which he had written aforetime against our friend C.,—before he left this country he sought a reconciliation with that gentleman (himself being his own introducer), and found it.

L. H. is now in Italy; on his departure to which land with much regret I took my leave of him and of his little family—seven of them, Sir, with their mother—and as kind a set of little people (T. H. and all), as affectionate children, as ever blessed a parent. Had you seen them, Sir, I think you could not have looked upon them as so many little Jonases—but rather as pledges of the vessel's safety, that was to bear such a freight of love.

I wish you would read Mr. H.'s lines to that same T. H., 'six years old, during a sickness':

> Sleep breaks at last from out thee,
> My little patient boy—

(they are to be found on the 47th page of 'Foliage')—and ask yourself how far they are out of the spirit of Christianity. I have a letter from Italy, received but the other day, into which L. H. has put as much heart, and as many friendly yearnings after old associates, and native country, as, I think, paper can well hold. It would do you no hurt to give that the perusal also.

From the *other gentleman* I neither expect nor desire (as he is well assured) any such concessions as L. H. made to C. What hath soured him, and made him to suspect his friends of infidelity towards him, when there was no such matter, I know not. I stood well with him for fifteen years (the proudest of my life), and have ever spoke my full mind of him to some, to whom his panegyric must naturally be least tasteful. I never in thought swerved from him, I never betrayed him, I never slackened in my admiration of him, I was the same to him (neither better nor worse) though he could not see it, as in the days when he thought fit to trust me. At this instant, he may be preparing for me some compliment, above my deserts, as he has sprinkled many such among his admirable books, for which I rest his debtor; or, for any thing I know, or can guess to the contrary, he may be about to read a lecture on my weaknesses. He is welcome to them (as he was to my humble hearth), if they can divert a spleen, or ventilate a fit of sullenness. I wish he would not quarrel with the world at the rate he does; but the reconciliation must be effected by himself, and I despair of living to see that day. But, protesting against much that he has written, and some things which he chooses to do; judging him by his conversation which I enjoyed so long, and relished so deeply; or by his books, in those places where no clouding passion intervenes—I should belie my own conscience, if I said less, than that I think W. H. to be, in his natural and healthy state, one of the wisest and finest spirits breathing. So far from being ashamed of that intimacy, which was betwixt us, it is my boast that I was able for

so many years to have preserved it entire; and I think I shall go to my grave without finding, or expecting to find, such another companion. But I forget my manners—you will pardon me, Sir—I return to the correspondence.——

[1]Sir, you were pleased (you know where) to invite me to a compliance with the wholesome forms and doctrines of the Church of England. I take your advice with as much kindness, as it was meant. But I must think the invitation rather more kind than seasonable. I am a Dissenter. The last sect, with which you can remember me to have made common confession, were the Unitarians. You would think it not very pertinent, if (fearing that all was not well with you), I were gravely to invite you (for a remedy) to attend with me a course of Mr. Belsham's Lectures at Hackney. Perhaps I have scruples to some of your forms and doctrines. But if I come, am I secure of civil treatment?—The last time I was in any of your places of worship was on Easter Sunday last. I had the satisfaction of listening to a very sensible sermon of an argumentative turn, delivered with great propriety, by one of your bishops. The place was Westminster Abbey. As such religion, as I have, has always acted on me more by way of sentiment than argumentative process, I was not unwilling, after sermon ended, by no unbecoming transition, to pass over to some serious feelings, impossible to be disconnected from the sight of those old tombs, &c. But, by whose order I know not, I was debarred that privilege even for so short a space as a few minutes; and

[1] *In* 1833 *Lamb recast this paragraph as below and printed it with the two that follow in* Elia. Last Essays, *under the title,* The Tombs in the Abbey: In a Letter to R— S— Esq.

Though in some points of doctrine, and perhaps of discipline I am diffident of lending a perfect assent to that church which you have so worthily *historified*, yet may the ill time never come to me, when with a chilled heart, or a portion of irreverent sentiment, I shall enter her beautiful and time-hallowed Edifices. Judge then of my mortification when, after attending the choral anthems of last Wednesday at Westminster, and being desirous of renewing my acquaintance, after lapsed years, with the tombs and antiquities there, I found myself excluded; turned out like a dog or some profane person, into the common street, with feelings not very congenial to the place, or to the solemn service which I had been listening to. It was a jar after that music.

You had your education, &c. 1833.

turned, like a dog or some profane person, out into the common street; with feelings, which I could not help, but not very congenial to the day or the discourse. I do not know that I shall ever venture myself again into one of your Churches.

You had your education at Westminster; and doubtless among those dim aisles and cloisters, you must have gathered much of that devotional feeling in those young years, on which your purest mind feeds still—and may it feed! The antiquarian spirit, strong in you, and gracefully blending ever with the religious, may have been sown in you among those wrecks of splendid mortality. You owe it to the place of your education; your owe it to your learned fondness for the architecture of your ancestors; you owe it to the venerableness of your ecclesiastical establishment, which is daily lessened and called in question through these practices—to speak aloud your sense of them; never to desist raising your voice against them, till they be totally done away with and abolished; till the doors of Westminster Abbey be no longer closed against the decent, though low-in-purse, enthusiast, or blameless devotee, who must commit an injury against his family economy, if he would be indulged with a bare admission within its walls. You owe it to the decencies, which you wish to see maintained in its impressive services, that our Cathedral be no longer an object of inspection to the poor at those times only, in which they must rob from their attendance on the worship every minute which they can bestow upon the fabrick. In vain the public prints have taken up this subject, in vain such poor nameless writers as myself express their indignation. A word from you, Sir—a hint in your Journal—would be sufficient to fling open the doors of the Beautiful Temple again, as we can remember them when we were boys. At that time of life, what would the imaginative faculty (such as it is) in both of us, have suffered, if the entrance to so much reflection had been obstructed by the demand of so much silver!—If we had scraped it up to gain an occasional admission (as we certainly should have done) would the sight of those old tombs have been as impressive to us (while we had been weighing anxiously prudence against sentiment)

as when the gates stood open, as those of the adjacent Park; when we could walk in at any time, as the mood brought us, for a shorter or longer time, as *that* lasted? Is the being shown over a place the same as silently for ourselves detecting the genius of it? In no part of our beloved Abbey now can a person find entrance (out of service time) under the sum of *two shillings*. The rich and the great will smile at the anticlimax, presumed to lie in these two short words. But you can tell them, Sir, how much quiet worth, how much capacity for enlarged feeling, how much taste and genius, may coexist, especially in youth, with a purse incompetent to this demand.—A respected friend of ours, during his late visit to the metropolis, presented himself for admission to Saint Paul's. At the same time a decently clothed man, with as decent a wife and child, were bargaining for the same indulgence. The price was only two-pence each person. The poor but decent man hesitated, desirous to go in; but there were three of them, and he turned away reluctantly. Perhaps he wished to have seen the tomb of Nelson. Perhaps the Interior of the Cathedral was his object. But in the state of his finances, even sixpence might reasonably seem too much. Tell the Aristocracy of the country (no man can do it more impressively); instruct them of what value these insignificant pieces of money, these minims to their sight, may be to their humbler brethren. Shame these Sellers out of the Temple. [1]Show the poor, that you can sometimes think of them in some other light than as mutineers and mal-contents. Conciliate them by such kind methods to their superiors, civil and ecclesiastical. Stop the mouths of the railers; and suffer your old friends, upon the old terms, again to honour and admire you. Stifle not the suggestions of your better nature with the [2]stale evasion, that an indiscriminate admission would expose the Tombs to violation. Remember your boy-days. Did you ever see, or hear, of a mob in the Abbey, while it was free to all? [3]Did the rabble come there, or trouble their heads about such speculations? It is all that you can do to drive them into your churches; they do not voluntarily offer them-

[1] Show the poor . . . and admire you. *omit* 1833. [2] stale evasion] pretext 1833. [3] Did] Do 1833.

selves. They have, alas! no passion for antiquities; for tomb of king or prelate, sage or poet. If they had, they would be no longer the rabble.

For forty years that I have known the Fabrick, the only well-attested charge of violation adduced, has been—a ridiculous dismemberment committed upon the effigy of that amiable spy Major André. And is it for this—the wanton mischief of some school-boy, fired perhaps with raw notions of Transatlantic Freedom—or the remote possibility of such a mischief occurring again, so easily to be prevented by stationing a constable within the walls, if the vergers are incompetent to the duty—is it upon such wretched pretences, that the people of England are made to pay a new Peter's Pence, so long abrogated; or must content themselves with contemplating the ragged Exterior of their Cathedral? The mischief was done about the time that you were a scholar there. Do you know any thing about the unfortunate relic?—[1]can you help us in this emergency to find the nose?—or can you give Chantry a notion (from memory) of its pristine life and vigour? I am willing for peace' sake to subscribe my guinea towards a restoration of the lamented feature.

I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

ELIA.

GUY FAUX

[Composed 1810. Printed in *The Reflector*, No. II (Jan.—March, 1811), Art. XVI, entitled *On the probable Effects of the Gunpowder Treason in this country if the Conspirators had accomplished their Object.* Reprinted, with additions, &c., in *The London Magazine*, vol. viii, p. 477 (Nov., 1823). First collected in *Elia.* Second Series. Philadelphia: 1812. Text of 1823.]

A VERY ingenious and subtle writer, whom there is good reason for suspecting to be an Ex-Jesuit, not unknown at Douay some five-and-twenty years since (he will not obtrude himself at M——th again in a hurry), about a twelvemonth back, set himself to prove the character of the Powder Plot conspirators to have been that of heroic self-devotedness and true Christian martyrdom.

[1] can you . . . ELIA. *omit* 1833.

Under the mask of Protestant candour, he actually gained admission for his treatise into a London weekly paper, not particularly distinguished for its zeal towards either religion. But, admitting Catholic principles, his arguments are shrewd and incontrovertible. He says—

Guy Faux was a fanatic, but he was no hypocrite. He ranks among *good haters*. He was cruel, bloody-minded, reckless of all considerations but those of an infuriated and bigoted faith; but he was a true son of the Catholic Church, a martyr and a confessor, for all that. He who can prevail upon himself to devote his life for a cause, however we may condemn his opinions or abhor his actions, vouches at least for the honesty of his principles and the disinterestedness of his motives. He may be guilty of the worst practices, but he is capable of the greatest. He is no longer a slave, but free. The contempt of death is the beginning of virtue. The hero of the Gunpowder-Plot was, if you will, a fool, a madman, an assassin; call him what names you please: still he was neither knave nor coward. He did not propose to blow up the Parliament and come off, scot-free, himself; he showed that he valued his own life no more than theirs in such a cause—where the integrity of the Catholic faith and the salvation of perhaps millions of souls was at stake. He did not call it a murder, but a sacrifice which he was about to achieve: he was armed with the Holy Spirit and with fire: he was the Church's chosen servant and her blessed martyr. He comforted himself as 'the best of cut-throats'. How many wretches are there who would have undertaken to do what he intended for a sum of money, if they could have got off with impunity! How few are there who would have put themselves in Guy Faux's situation to save the universe! Yet in the latter case we affect to be thrown into greater consternation than at the most unredeemed acts of villany, as if the absolute disinterestedness of the motive doubled the horror of the deed! The cowardice and selfishness of mankind are in fact shocked at the consequences to themselves (if such examples are held up for imitation), and they make a fearful outcry against the violation of every principle of morality, lest they too should be called on for any such tremendous sacrifices—lest they in their turn should have to go on the forlorn hope of extra-official duty. *Charity begins at home*, is a maxim that prevails as well in the courts of conscience as in those of prudence. We would be thought to shudder at the consequences of crime to others, while we tremble for them to ourselves. We talk of the dark and cowardly assassin; and this is well, when an individual shrinks from the face of an enemy, and purchases his own safety by striking a blow in the dark: but how the charge of cowardly can be applied to the public assassin, who, in the very act of destroying another, lays down his life as the pledge and forfeit of his sincerity and boldness, I am at a loss to devise. There may be barbarous prejudice, rooted hatred, unprincipled treachery, in such an act; but he who resolves to take all the danger and odium upon himself, can no more be branded with cowardice, than Regulus devoting himself for his country, or Codrus leaping into the fiery gulf. A wily Father Inquisitor, coolly and with plenary authority condemn-

ing hundreds of helpless, unoffending victims, to the flames or to the horrors of a living tomb, while he himself would not suffer a hair of his head to be hurt, is to me a character without any qualifying trait in it. Again; the Spanish conqueror and hero, the favourite of his monarch, who enticed thirty thousand poor Mexicans into a large open building, under promise of strict faith and cordial good-will, and then set fire to it, making sport of the cries and agonies of these deluded creatures, is an instance of uniting the most hardened cruelty with the most heartless selfishness. His plea was keeping no faith with heretics: this was Guy Faux's too; but I am sure at least that the latter kept faith with himself: he was in earnest in his professions. *His* was not gay, wanton, unfeeling depravity; he did not murder in sport; it was serious work that he had taken in hand. To see this arch-bigot, this heart-whole traitor, this pale miner in the infernal regions, skulking in his retreat with his cloak and dark lanthorn, moving cautiously about among his barrels of gunpowder loaded with death, but not yet ripe for destruction, regardless of the lives of others, and more than indifferent to his own, presents a picture of the strange infatuation of the human understanding, but not of the depravity of the human will, without an equal. There were thousands of pious Papists privy to and ready to applaud the deed when done:—there was no one but our old fifth-of-November friend, who still flutters in rags and straw on the occasion, that had the courage to attempt it. In him stern duty and unshaken faith prevailed over natural frailty.

It is impossible, upon Catholic principles, not to admit the force of this reasoning; we can only not help smiling (with the writer) at the simplicity of the gulled editor, swallowing the dregs of Loyola for the very quintessence of sublimated reason in England at the commencement of the nineteenth century. We will just, as a contrast, show what we Protestants (who are a party concerned) thought upon the same subject, at a period rather nearer to the heroic project in question.

[1]The Gunpowder Treason was the subject which called forth the earliest specimen which is left us of the pulpit eloquence of Jeremy Taylor. When he preached the Sermon on that anniversary, which is printed at the end of the folio edition of his Sermons, he was a young man just commencing his ministry, under the auspices of Archbishop Laud. [2]From the learning, and maturest oratory, which it manifests, one should rather have conjectured it to have proceeded from the same person after

[1] The Gunpowder Treason . . . *The text of* 1811 *begins here.* [2] From the learning, and] From the amazing research of learning, and powers of 1811.

he was ripened by time into a Bishop and Father of the [1]Church.—' And, really, these *Romano-barbari* could never [2]pretend to any precedent for an act so barbarous as theirs. [3]Adramelech, indeed, killed a king, but he spared the people; Haman would have killed the people, but spared the king; but that both king and people, princes and judges, branch and rush and root, should die at once (as if Caligula's wish were actuated, and all England upon one head), was never known till now, that all the malice of the world met in this as in a centre. The Sicilian evensong, the matins of St. Bartholomew, known for the pitiless and damned massacres, were but *κάπνου σκίας ὄναρ*, the dream of the shadow of smoke, if compared with this great fire. *In tam occupato sæculo fabulas vulgares nequitia non invenit.* This was busy age; Herostratus must have invented a more sublimed malice than the burning of one temple, or not have been so much as spoke of since the discovery of the powder treason. But I must make more haste, I shall not else climb the sublimity of this impiety. Nero was sometimes the *populare odium*, was popularly hated, and deserved it too, for he slew his master, and his wife, and all his family, once or twice over,—opened his mother's womb,—fired the city, laughed at it, slandered the Christians for it; but yet all these were but *principia malorum*, the very first rudiments of evil. Add, then, to these, Herod's master-piece at Ramah, as it was deciphered by the tears and sad threnes of the matrons in an universal mourning for the loss of their pretty infants; yet this of Herod will prove but an infant wickedness, and that of Nero the evil but of one city. I would willingly have found out an example, but see I cannot; should

[1] Church. The conclusion of his discourse is so pertinent to my subject, that I must beg your patience while I transcribe it. He has been drawing a parallel between the fire which Vaux and his accomplices meditated, and that which James and John were willing to have called down from heaven upon the heads of the Samaritans who would not receive our Saviour into their houses. 'Lastly,' he says, 'it (the powder treason) was a fire so strange that it had no example. The apostles, indeed, pleaded a mistaken precedent for the reasonableness of their demand, they desired leave to do but *even as Elias did.* The Greeks only retain this clause, it is not in the Bibles of the Church of Rome. And, really, 1811. [2] pretend to] pretend 1811. [3] Adramelech] Adrimeleck 1811.

I put into the scale the extract of all the old tyrants [1]famous in antique stories,—

> Bistonii stabulum regis, Busiridis aras,
> Antiphatæ mensas, et Taurica regna Thoantis;—

should I take for true story the highest cruelty as it was fancied by the most hieroglyphical Egyptian, this alone would weigh them down, as if the Alps were put in a scale against the dust of a balance. For had this accursed treason prospered, we should have had the whole kingdom mourn for the inestimable loss of its chiefest glory, its life, its present joy, and all its very hopes for the future. For such was their destined malice, that they would not only have inflicted so cruel a blow, but have made it incurable, by cutting off our supplies of joy, the whole succession of the Line Royal. Not only the vine itself, but all the *gemmulæ*, and the tender olive branches, should either have been bent to their intentions, and made to grow crooked, or else been broken.

'And now, after such [2]a sublimity of malice, I will not instance in the sacrilegious ruins of the neighbouring temples, which needs must have perished in the flame,—nor in the disturbing the ashes of our intombed kings, devouring their dead ruins like sepulchral dogs,—these are but minutes, in respect of the ruin prepared for the living temples :—

> Stragem sed istam non tulit
> Christus cadentum Principum
> Impune, ne forsan sui
> Patris periret fabrica.
> Ergo quæ poterit lingua retexere
> Laudes, Christe, tuas, qui domitum struis
> Infidum populum cum Duce perfido!'

In such strains of eloquent indignation did Jeremy Taylor's young oratory inveigh against that stupendous attempt, which he truly says had no parallel in ancient or modern times. A century and a half of European crimes has elapsed since he made the assertion, and his position remains in its strength. He wrote near the time in which the nefarious project had like to have been completed. Men's minds still were shuddering from the recentness of the escape. It must have been within his memory, or have been sounded in his ears so young by his parents, that he would seem,

[1] famous *omit* 1811. [2] a *omit* 1811.

in his maturer years, to have remembered it. No wonder then that he describes it in words that burn. But to [1]us, to whom the tradition has come slowly down, and has had time to cool, the story of Guido Vaux sounds rather like a tale, a fable, and an invention, than true history. It supposes such gigantic audacity of daring, combined with such more than infantile stupidity in the motive,—such a combination of the fiend and the monkey,—that credulity is almost swallowed up in contemplating the singularity of the attempt. It has accordingly, in some degree, shared the fate of fiction. It is familiarized to us in a kind of serio-ludicrous way, like the story of *Guy of Warwick*, or *Valentine and Orson*. The way which we take to perpetuate the memory of this [2]deliverance is well adapted to keep up this fabular notion. Boys go about the streets annually with a beggarly scarecrow dressed up, which is to be burnt, indeed, at night, with holy zeal; but, meantime, they beg a penny for *poor Guy:* this periodical petition, which we have heard from our infancy,—combined with the dress and appearance of the effigy, so well calculated to move compassion,—[3]has the effect of quite removing from our fancy the horrid circumstances of the story which is thus commemorated; and in *poor Guy* vainly should we try to recognize any of the features of that tremendous madman in iniquity, Guido Vaux, with his horrid crew of accomplices, that sought to emulate earthquakes and bursting volcanoes in their more than mortal mischief.

Indeed, the whole ceremony of burning Guy Faux, or *the Pope*, as he is indifferently called, is a sort of *Treason Travestie*, and admirably adapted to lower our feelings upon this memorable subject. The printers of the little duodecimo *Prayer* [4]*Book*, printed by T. Baskett,[a] in 1749,

[a] The same, I presume, upon whom the clergyman in the song of the *Vicar and Moses*, not without judgment, passes this memorable censure—

> Here, Moses, the King:—
> 'Tis a scandalous thing
> That this Baskett should print for the Crown.

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[1] us, to] us, Mr. Reflector, to 1811. [2] deliverance is] deliverance (out of church) is 1811. [3] has] have 1811. [4] *Book*, which I dare say you have seen, Mr. Reflector, printed . . . 1811.

which has the effigy of his sacred Majesty George II. piously prefixed, have illustrated the service (a very fine one in itself) which is appointed for the Anniversary of this Day, with a print, which it is not very easy to describe, but the contents appear to be these :—The scene is a room, I conjecture, in the king's palace. Two persons,—one of whom I take to be James himself, from his wearing his hat while the other stands bareheaded,—are intently surveying a sort of speculum, or magic mirror, which stands upon a pedestal in the midst of the room, in which a little figure of Guy Faux with his dark lantern approaching the door of the Parliament House is made discernible by the light proceeding from a *great eye* which shines in from the topmost corner of the apartment, by which eye the pious artist no doubt meant to designate Providence. On the other side of the mirror, is a figure doing something, which puzzled me when a child, and continues to puzzle me now. The best I can make of it is, that it is a conspirator busy laying the train,—but then, why is he represented in the king's chamber ?—Conjecture upon so fantastical a design is vain, and I only notice the print as being one of the earliest graphic representations which woke my childhood into wonder, and doubtless combined with the mummery before-mentioned, to take off the edge of that horror which the naked historical mention of Guido's cónspiracy could not have failed of exciting.

Now that so many years are past since that abominable machination was happily frustrated, it will not, I hope, be considered a profane sporting with the subject, if we take no very serious survey of the consequences that would have flowed from this plot if it had had a successful issue. The first thing that strikes us, in a selfish point of view, is the material change which it must have produced in the course of the nobility. All the ancient peerage being extinguished, as it was intended, at one blow, the *Red-Book* must have been closed for ever, or a new race of peers must have been created to supply the deficiency ; as the first part of this dilemma is a deal too shocking to think of, what a fund of mouth-watering reflections does this give rise to in the breasts of us plebeians of A.D. [1]1823. Why you or I,

[1] 1823] 1811. 1811.

[1]reader, might have been Duke of —— or Earl of ——: I particularize no titles, to avoid the least suspicion of intention to usurp the dignities of the two noblemen whom I have in my eye:—but a feeling more dignified than envy sometimes excites a sigh, when I think how the posterity of Guido's Legion of Honour (among whom you or I might have been) might have rolled down 'dulcified', as Burke expresses it, 'by an exposure to the influence of heaven in a long flow of generations, from the hard, acidulous, metallic tincture of the spring'.[a] What new orders of merit, think you, this English Napoleon would have chosen? Knights of the Barrel, or Lords of the Tub, Grand Almoners of the Cellar, or Ministers of Explosion. We should have given the Train *couchant*, and the Fire *rampant* in our arms; we should have quartered the dozen white matches in our coats;—the Shallows would have been nothing to us.

Turning away from these mortifying reflections, let us contemplate its effects upon the *other house*, for they were all to have gone together,—King, Lords, Commons.——

To assist our imagination, let us take leave to suppose, —and we do it in the harmless wantonness of fancy,—to suppose that the tremendous explosion had taken place in our days;—we better know what a House of Commons is in our days, and can better estimate our loss;—let us [2]imagine, then, to ourselves, the United [3]Members sitting in full conclave above—Faux just ready with his train and matches below; in his hand a 'reed tipt with fire'—he applies the fatal engine——

To assist our notions still further, let us [4]suppose some lucky dog of a reporter, who had escaped by miracle upon some plank of St. Stephen's benches, and came plump upon the roof of the adjacent Abbey, from whence descending, at some neighbouring coffee-house, first wiping his clothes and calling for a glass of lemonade, he sits down and reports what he had heard and seen (quorum pars magna fuit) for the *Morning Post* or the *Courier*,—we can

[a] Letter to a Noble Lord.

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[1] reader] Mr. Reflector 1811.
[2] imagine] image 1811.
[3] Members] Parliament 1811.
[4] suppose] suppose that 1811.

scarcely imagine him describing the event in any other words but some such as these :—

'A *Motion* was put and carried, That this House do *adjourn :* That the Speaker do *quit the Chair.* The House ROSE amid clamours for Order.'

In some such way the event might most technically have been conveyed to the public. But a poetical [1]mind, not content with this dry method of narration, cannot help pursuing the effects of this tremendous blowing up, this adjournment in the air *sine die.* It sees the benches mount,—the Chair first, and then the benches, and first the Treasury Bench, hurried up in this nitrous explosion ; the Members, as it were, pairing off; Whigs and Tories taking their friendly apotheosis together, (as they did their sandwiches below in Bellamy's room). Fancy, in her flight, keeps pace with the aspiring legislators, she sees the awful seat of order mounting till it becomes finally fixed a constellation, next to Cassiopeia's chair,—the wig of him that sat in it taking its place near Berenice's [2]curls. St. Peter, at Heaven's wicket,—no, not St. Peter,—St. Stephen, with open arms, receives his own.——

While Fancy beholds these celestial appropriations, Reason, no less pleased, discerns the mighty benefit which so complete a renovation must produce below. Let the most determined foe to corruption, the most thorough-paced redresser of abuses, try to conceive a more absolute purification of the House than this was calculated to produce ;—why, Pride's Purge was nothing to it ;—the whole borough-mongering system would have been got rid of, fairly *exploded ;*—with it, the senseless distinctions of party must have disappeared ; faction must have vanished ; corruption have expired in air. From Hundred, Tything, and Wapentake, some new Alfred would have convened, in all its purity, the primitive Wittenagemot,—fixed upon

[1] mind, not] mind, Mr. Reflector, not 1811. [2] curls. St. Peter] curls ;—all, in their degrees, glittering somewhere. Sussex misses her member [a] on earth, but is consoled to view him, on a starry night ; siding the Great Bear. Cambridge beholds hers [b] next Scorpio. The gentle Castlereagh curdles in the Milky Way. St. Peter 1811.

[a] J— F— Esq. [b] Sir V— G—

a basis of property or population, permanent as the poles——

From this dream of universal restitution, Reason and Fancy with difficulty awake to view the real state of things. But, blessed be [1]Heaven, St. Stephen's walls are yet standing, all her seats firmly secured; nay, some have doubted (since the Septennial Act) whether gunpowder itself, or any thing short of a *Committee above stairs*, would be able to shake any one member from his seat;—that great and final improvement to the Abbey, which is all that seems wanting,—[2]the removing Westminster-hall and its appendages, and letting in the view of the Thames,—must not be expected in our days. Dismissing, therefore, all such speculations as mere tales of a tub, it is the duty of every honest Englishman to endeavour, by means less wholesale than Guido's, to ameliorate, without extinguishing, Parliaments; to hold the *lantern* to the dark places of corruption; to apply the *match* to the rotten parts of the system only; and to wrap himself up, not in the muffling mantle of conspiracy, but in the warm, honest *cloak* of integrity and patriotic intention.

[3]Elia.

[4]NUGÆ CRITICÆ

On a Passage in 'The Tempest'

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. viii, p. 492 (Nov., 1823). First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

As long as I can remember the play of the Tempest, one passage in it has always set me upon wondering. It has puzzled me beyond measure. In vain I strove to find the meaning of it. I seemed doomed to cherish infinite hopeless curiosity.

It is where Prospero, relating the banishment of Sycorax from Argier, adds—

[1] Heaven, St. Stephen's] Heaven, Mr. Reflector, St. Stephen's 1811. [2] the] by 1811. [3] Elia] I am, Sir, yours, Speculator 1811. [4] *In* The London Magazine *the title ran:* Nugae Criticae. By the author of *Elia*. II. On a Passage in 'The Tempest'. *No I. was the essay entitled* Defence of the Sonnets of Sir Philip Sydney (*L. M., Sept.* 1823) *reprinted in* Elia. Last Essays, 1833, *under the title,* Some Sonnets of *&c.*

—For one thing that she did
They would not take her life—

how have I pondered over this, when a boy! how have I longed for some authentic memoir of the witch to clear up the obscurity!—Was the story extant in the Chronicles of Algiers? Could I get at it by some fortunate introduction to the Algerine ambassador? Was a voyage thither practicable? The Spectator (I knew) went to Grand Cairo, only to measure a pyramid. Was not the object of my quest of at least as much importance?—The blue-eyed hag—could *she* have done any thing good or meritorious? might that Succubus relent? then might there be hope for the devil. I have often admired since, that none of the commentators have boggled at this passage—how they could swallow this camel—such a tantalising piece of obscurity, such an abortion of an anecdote.

At length I think I have lighted upon a clue, which may lead to show what was passing in the mind of Shakspeare when he dropped this imperfect rumour. In the 'accurate description of Africa, by John Ogilby (Folio), 1670', page 230, I find written, as follows. The marginal title to the narrative is—

Charles the Fifth besieges Algier

In the last place, we will briefly give an Account of the Emperour *Charles* the Fifth, when he besieged this City; and of the great Loss he suffer'd therein.

This Prince in the Year One thousand five hundred forty one, having Embarqued upon the Sea an Army of Twenty two thousand Men aboard Eighteen Gallies, and an hundred tall Ships, not counting the Barques and Shallops, and other small Boats, in which he had engaged the principal of the *Spanish* and *Italian* Nobility, with a good number of the Knights of *Maltha;* he was to Land on the Coast of *Barbary,* at a Cape call'd *Matifou.* From this place unto the City of *Algier* a flat Shore or Strand extends itself for about four Leagues, the which is exceeding favourable to Gallies. There he put ashore with his Army, and in a few days caused a Fortress to be built, which unto this day is call'd *The Castle of the Emperor.*

In the mean time the City of *Algier* took the Alarm, having in it at that time but Eight hundred *Turks,* and Six thousand *Moors,* poor-spirited men, and unexercised in Martial affairs; besides it was at that time Fortifi'd onely with Walls, and had no Out-works: Insomuch that by reason of its weakness, and the great Forces of the Emperour, it could not in appearance escape taking. In fine, it was Attaqued with such Order, that the Army came up to the very Gates, where the

Chevalier de Sauignac, a *Frenchman* by Nation, made himself remarkable above all the rest, by the miracles of his Valour. For having repulsed the *Turks*, who having made a Sally at the Gate call'd *Babason*, and there desiring to enter along with them, when he saw that they shut the Gate upon him, he ran his Ponyard into the same, and left it sticking deep therein. They next fell to Battering the City by the Force of Cannon; which the Assailants so weakened, that in that great extremity the Defendants lost their Courage, and resolved to surrender.

But as they were thus intending, there was a Witch of the Town, whom the History doth not name, which went to seek out *Assam Aga*, that Commanded within, and pray'd him to make it good yet nine Days longer, with assurance, that within that time he should infallibly see *Algier* delivered from that Siege, and the whole Army of the Enemy dispersed, so that *Christians* should be as cheap as Birds. In a word, the thing did happen in the manner as foretold; for upon the Twenty first day of *October* in the same Year, there fell a continual Rain upon the Land, and so furious a Storm at Sea, that one might have seen Ships hoisted into the Clouds, and in one instant again precipitated into the bottom of the Water: insomuch that that same dreadful Tempest was followed with the loss of fifteen Gallies, and above an hundred other Vessels; which was the cause why the Emperour, seeing his Army wasted by the bad Weather, pursued by a Famine, occasioned by wrack of his Ships, in which was the greatest part of his Victuals and Ammunition, he was constrain'd to raise the Siege, and set Sail for *Sicily*, whither he Retreated with the miserable Reliques of his Fleet.

In the mean time that Witch, being acknowledged the Deliverer of *Algier*, was richly remunerated, and the Credit of her Charms authorized. So that ever since Witchcraft hath been very freely tolerated; of which the Chief of the Town, and even those who are esteem'd to be of greatest Sanctity among them, such as are the Marabou's, a Religious Order of their Sect, do for the most part make Profession of it, under a goodly Pretext of certain Revelations which they say they have had from their Prophet *Mahomet*.

And hereupon those of *Algier*, to palliate the shame and the reproaches that are thrown upon them for making use of a Witch in the danger of this Siege, do say, that the loss of the Forces of *Charles V.* was caused by a Prayer of one of their *Marabou's*, named *Cidy Utica*, which was at that time in great Credit, not under the notion of a *Magitian*, but for a person of a holy life. Afterwards in remembrance of their success, they have erected unto him a small mosque without the *Babason* Gate, where he is buried, and in which they keep sundry Lamps burning in honour of him: nay they sometimes repair thither to make their *Sala*, for a testimony of greater Veneration.

Can it be doubted for a moment, that the dramatist had come fresh from reading some *older narrative* of this deliverance of Algier by a witch, and transferred the merit of the deed to his Sycorax, exchanging only the 'rich remuneration', which did not suit his purpose, to the

simple pardon of her life? Ogilby wrote in 1670; but the authorities to which he refers for his Account of Barbary are—Johannes de Leo, or Africanus—Louis Marmol—Diego de Haedo—Johannes Gramaye—Bræves—Cel. Curio—and Diego de Torres—names totally unknown to me—and to which I beg leave to refer the curious reader for his fuller satisfaction.

L.

REVIEW OF COMIC TALES, Etc.

by C. Dibdin the Younger

[Printed in *The New Times*, Jan. 27, 1825. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

In this age of hyper-poetic flights, and talent in a frenzy aping genius, it is consolatory to see a little volume of verse in the good old sober manner of Queen Ann's days, when verse walked high, rather than flew, and sought its nutriment upon this diurnal sphere, not rapt above the moon. To a lover of Chess, who at the same time can relish the Rape of the Lock, the poem which forms the distinguishing feature of this volume cannot fail to impart pleasure. It is a mock heroic of course, descriptive of the Game; and the Homeric parodies are adroit and numerous. The names of the mortal combatants, Blanc, Blanche, Croesieroi, Reinelawne, Sir Garderoi, Sir Gardereene, etc. on one side, with Niger, Nigra, Mitrex, Mitre regina, Sir Rexensor, Sir Reginalde, etc. on the other, are happily conceived, and the strife thickens to the conclusion. The Gods and Goddesses are the Games of Chance, or Mixed Chance, Faro, Whist, Loo, etc. in all their attributes, with old Hazard for their Jupiter, a fine gruff, grumbling Dice-compeller, whose dice-box is to him what the awful Homeric chain was to his Prototype. The soft blandishments of *Joan*, the gentle *Pope*—

Intriguing Hebe to the God of Game—

wrings from his austere Deity his slow permission for the interference of the Olympians in the fight below, and accordingly they range on either side, as in the Iliad; and

by their infusion of passions, caprices, impulses, peculiar to the nature of their own warfare, confound and embroil the pure contest of skill through five Cantos very entertainingly. We confess we are more at home in Hoyle than in Phillidor; but by the help of the notes, we played the game through ourselves very tolerably. We subjoin an exquisite simile, with which the third Canto commences —a description of the Morning, redolent of Swift and Gay;—

> Now Morning, yawning, rais'd her from her bed,
> Slipp'd on her wrapper blue and 'kerchief red,
> And took from Night the key of Sleep's abode—
> For Night within that mansion had bestow'd
> The Hours of Day; now, turn and turn about,
> Morn takes the key, and lets the Day Hours out;
> Laughing they issue from the ebon gate,
> And Night walks in. As when, in drowsy state,
> Some *watchman*, wed to *one who chars all day*,
> Takes to his lodgings door his creeping way;
> His Rib, arising, lets him in to sleep,
> While she emerges to scrub, dust, and sweep.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR OF MR. LISTON

[Printed without signature in *The London Magazine*, New Series, vol. i, p. 17 (Jan., 1825). First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

THE subject of our Memoir is lineally descended from Johan De L'Estonne (see Doomesday Book, where he is so written) who came in with the Conqueror, and had lands awarded him at Lupton Magna, in Kent. His particular merits or services, Fabian, whose authority I chiefly follow, has forgotten, or perhaps thought it immaterial, to specify. Fuller thinks that he was standard-bearer to Hugo De Agmondesham, a powerful Norman Baron, who was slain by the hand of Harold himself at the fatal battle of Hastings. Be this as it may, we find a family of that name flourishing some centuries later in that county. John Delliston, Knight, was high sheriff for Kent, according to Fabian, *quinto Henrici Sexti;* and we trace the lineal branch flourishing downwards—the orthography varying, according to the unsettled usage of the times, from Delleston

to Leston, or Liston, between which it seems to have alternated, till, in the latter end of the reign of James I, it was finally settled into the determinate and pleasing dissyllabic arrangement which it still retains. Aminadab Liston, the eldest male representative of the family of that day, was of the strictest order of Puritans. Mr. Foss, of Pall Mall, has obligingly communicated to me an undoubted tract of his, which bears the initials only, A. L. and is entitled, ' the Grinning Glass : or Actor's Mirrour, wherein the vituperative Visnomy of vicious Players for the Scene is as virtuously reflected back upon their mimetic Monstrosities as it has viciously (hitherto) vitiated with its vile Vanities her Votarists.' A strange title, but bearing the impress of those absurdities with which the title pages of that pamphlet-spawning age abounded. The work bears date 1617. It preceded the Histriomastix by fifteen years ; and as it went before it in time, so it comes not far short of it in virulence. It is amusing to find an ancestor of Liston's thus bespattering the players at the commencement of the seventeenth century. ' Thinketh He (the actor), with his costive countenances, to wry a sorrowing soul out of her anguish, or by defacing the divine denotement of destinate dignity (daignely described in the face humane and no other) to reinstamp the Paradice-plotted similitude with a novel and naughty approximation (not in the first intention) to those abhorred and ugly God-forbidden correspondences, with flouting Apes' jeering gibberings, and Babion babbling-like, to hoot out of countenance all modest measure, as if our sins were not sufficing to stoop our backs without He wresting and crooking his members to mistimed mirth (rather malice) in deformed fashion, leering when he should learn, prating for praying, goggling his eyes (better upturned for grace), whereas in Paradice (if we can go thus high for His profession) that devilish Serpent appeareth his undoubted Predecessor, first induing a mask like some roguish roistering Roscius (I spit at them all) to beguile with Stage shows the gaping Woman, whose Sex hath still chiefly upheld these Mysteries, and are voiced to be the chief Stage-haunters, where, as I am told, the custom is commonly to mumble (between acts) apples, not ambiguously derived from that pernicious Pippin

(worse in effect than the Apples of Discord) whereas sometimes the hissing sounds of displeasure, as I hear, do lively reintonate that snake-taking-leave, and diabolical goings off, in Paradice.'

The puritanic effervescence of the early Presbyterians appears to have abated with time, and the opinions of the more immediate ancestors of our subject to have subsided at length into a strain of moderate Calvinism. Still a tincture of the old leaven was to be expected among the posterity of A. L.

Our hero was an only son of Habakuk Liston, settled as an Anabaptist minister upon the patrimonial soil of his ancestors. A regular certificate appears, thus entered in the church book at Lupton Magna. '*Johannes, filius Habakuk et Rebeccæ Liston, Dissentientium, natus quinto Decembri* 1780, *baptizatus sexto Februarii sequentis ; Sponsoribus J. et W. Woollaston, unâ cum Maria Merryweather.*' The singularity of an Anabaptist minister conforming to the child rites of the church, would have tempted me to doubt the authenticity of this entry, had I not been obliged with the actual sight of it, by the favour of Mr. Minns, the intelligent and worthy parish clerk of Lupton. Possibly some expectation in point of worldly advantages from some of the sponsors, might have induced this unseemly deviation, as it must have appeared, from the practice and principles of that generally rigid sect. The term *Dissentientium* was possibly intended by the orthodox clergyman as a slur upon the supposed inconsistency. What, or of what nature, the expectations we have hinted at, may have been, we have now no means of ascertaining. Of the Wollastons no trace is now discoverable in the village. The name of Merryweather occurs over the front of a grocer's shop at the western extremity of Lupton.

Of the infant Liston we find no events recorded before his fourth year, in which a severe attack of the measles bid fair to have robbed the rising generation of a fund of innocent entertainment. He had it of the confluent kind, as it is called, and the child's life was for a week or two despaired of. His recovery he always attributes (under Heaven) to the humane interference of one Doctor Wilhelm Richter, a German empiric, who, in this extremity, pre-

scribed a copious diet of *Saur Kraut*, which the child was observed to reach at with avidity, when other food repelled him; and from this change of diet his restoration was rapid and complete. We have often heard him name the circumstance with gratitude; and it is not altogether surprising, that a relish of this kind of aliment, so abhorrent and harsh to common English palates, has accompanied him through life. When any of Mr. Liston's intimates invite him to supper, he never fails of finding, nearest to his knife and fork, a dish of *Saur Kraut*.

At the age of nine we find our subject under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Goodenough (his father's health not permitting him probably to instruct him himself), by whom he was inducted into a competent portion of Latin and Greek, with some mathematics, till the death of Mr. Goodenough, in his own seventieth, and Master Liston's eleventh year, put a stop for the present to his classical progress.

We have heard our hero with emotions, which do his heart honour, describe the awful circumstances attending the decease of this worthy old gentleman. It seems they had been walking out together, master and pupil, in a fine sunset, to the distance of three quarters of a mile west of Lupton, when a sudden curiosity took Mr. Goodenough to look down upon a chasm, where a shaft had been lately sunk in a mining speculation (then projecting, but abandoned soon after, as not answering the promised success, by Sir Ralph Shepperton, Knight, and member for the county). The old clergyman leaning over, either with incaution, or sudden giddiness (probably a mixture of both), suddenly lost his footing, and, to use Mr. Liston's phrase, disappeared; and was doubtless broken into a thousand pieces. The sound of his head, &c. dashing successively upon the projecting masses of the chasm, had such an effect upon the child, that a serious sickness ensued, and even for many years after his recovery he was not once seen so much as to smile.

The joint death of both his parents, which happened not many months after this disastrous accident, and were probably (one or both of them) accelerated by it, threw our youth upon the protection of his maternal great aunt,

Mrs. Sittingbourn. Of this aunt we have never heard him speak but with expressions amounting almost to reverence. To the influence of her early counsels and manners, he has always attributed the firmness with which, in maturer years, thrown upon a way of life, commonly not the best adapted to gravity and self-retirement, he has been able to maintain a serious character, untinctured with the levities incident to his profession. Ann Sittingbourn (we have seen her portrait by Hudson) was stately, stiff, tall, with a cast of features strikingly resembling the subject of this memoir. Her estate in Kent was spacious and well-wooded; the house, one of those venerable old mansions which are so impressive in childhood, and so hardly forgotten in succeeding years. In the venerable solitudes of Charnwood, among thick shades of the oak and beech (this last his favourite tree), the young Liston cultivated those contemplative habits which have never entirely deserted him in after years. Here he was commonly in the summer months to be met with, with a book in his hand—not a play-book—meditating. Boyle's Reflections was at one time the darling volume, which in its turn was superseded by Young's Night Thoughts, which has continued its hold upon him through life. He carries it always with him; and it is no uncommon thing for him to be seen, in the refreshing intervals of his occupation, leaning against a side scene, in a sort of Herbert of Cherbury posture, turning over a pocket edition of his favourite author.

But the solitudes of Charnwood were not destined always to obscure the path of our young hero. The premature death of Mrs. Sittingbourn, at the age of 70, occasioned by incautious burning of a pot of charcoal in her sleeping chamber, left him in his 19th year nearly without resources. That the stage at all should have presented itself as an eligible scope for his talents, and, in particular, that he should have chosen a line so foreign to what appears to have been his turn of mind, may require some explanation.

At Charnwood then we behold him thoughtful, grave, ascetic. From his cradle averse to flesh meats, and strong drink; abstemious even beyond the genius of the place; and almost in spite of the remonstrances of his great aunt,

who, though strict, was not rigid; water was his habitual drink, and his food little beyond the mast, and beech nuts, of his favourite groves. It is a medical fact, that this kind of diet, however favourable to the contemplative powers of the primitive hermits, &c., is but ill adapted to the less robust minds and bodies of a later generation. Hypochondria almost constantly ensues. It was so in the case of the young Liston. He was subject to sights, and had visions. Those arid beech nuts, distilled by a complexion naturally adust, mounted into an occiput, already prepared to kindle by long seclusion, and the fervour of strict Calvinistic notions. In the glooms of Charnwood he was assailed by illusions, similar in kind to those which are related of the famous Anthony of Padua. Wild antic faces would ever and anon protrude themselves upon his *sensorium*. Whether he shut his eyes, or kept them open, the same illusions operated. The darker and more profound were his cogitations, the droller and more whimsical became the apparitions. They buzzed about him thick as flies, flapping at him, flouting him, hooting in his ear, yet with such comic appendages, that what at first was his bane, became at length his solace; and he desired no better society than that of his merry phantasmata. We shall presently find in what way this remarkable phenomenon influenced his future destiny.

On the death of Mrs. Sittingbourn, we find him received into the family of Mr. Willoughby, an eminent Turkey merchant, resident in Birchin-lane, London. We lose a little while here the chain of his history; by what inducements this gentleman was determined to make him an inmate of his house. Probably he had had some personal kindness for Mrs. Sittingbourn formerly; but however it was, the young man was here treated more like a son than a clerk, though he was nominally but the latter. Different avocations, the change of scene, with that alternation of business and recreation, which in its greatest perfection is to be had only in London, appear to have weaned him in a short time from the hypochondriacal affections which had beset him at Charnwood. In the three years which followed his removal to Birchin-lane, we find him making more than one journey to the Levant,

as chief factor for Mr. Willoughby, at the Porte. We could easily fill our biography with the pleasant passages which we have heard him relate as having happened to him at Constantinople, such as his having been taken up on suspicion of a design of penetrating the seraglio, &c.; but, with the deepest convincement of this gentleman's own veracity, we think that some of the stories are of that whimsical, and others of that romantic nature, which, however diverting, would be out of place in a narrative of this kind, which aims not only at strict truth, but at avoiding the very appearance of the contrary.

We will now bring him over the seas again, and suppose him in the counting-house in Birchin-lane, his protector satisfied with the returns of his factorage, and all going on so smoothly that we may expect to find Mr. Liston at last an opulent merchant upon 'Change, as it is called. But see the turns of destiny! Upon a summer's excursion into Norfolk, in the year 1801, the accidental sight of pretty Sally Parker, as she was called (then in the Norwich company), diverted his inclinations at once from commerce; and he became, in the language of common-place biography, stage-struck. Happy for the lovers of mirth was it, that our hero took this turn; he might else have been to this hour that unentertaining character, a plodding London merchant.

We accordingly find him shortly after making his *debut*, as it is called, upon the Norwich boards, in the season of that year, being then in the 22d year of his age. Having a natural bent to tragedy, he chose the part of Pyrrhus in the Distressed Mother, to Sally Parker's Hermione. We find him afterwards as Barnwell, Altamont, Chamont, &c.; but, as if nature had destined him to the sock, an unavoidable infirmity absolutely discapacitated him for tragedy. His person at this latter period, of which I have been speaking, was graceful, and even commanding; his countenance set to gravity; he had the power of arresting the attention of an audience at first sight almost beyond any other tragic actor. But he could not hold it. To understand this obstacle we must go back a few years to those appalling reveries at Charnwood. Those illusions, which had vanished before the dissipations of a less recluse

life, and more free society, now in his solitary studies, and amid the intense calls upon feeling incident to tragic acting, came back upon him with tenfold vividness. In the midst of some most pathetic passage, the parting of Jaffier with his dying friend, for instance, he would suddenly be surprised with a fit of violent horse laughter. While the spectators were all sobbing before him with emotion, suddenly one of those grotesque faces would peep out upon him, and he could not resist the impulse. A timely excuse once or twice served his purpose, but no audiences could be expected to bear repeatedly this violation of the continuity of feeling. He describes them (the illusions) as so many demons haunting him, and paralysing every effect. Even now, I am told, he cannot recite the famous soliloquy in Hamlet, even in private, without immoderate bursts of laughter. However, what he had not force of reason sufficient to overcome, he had good sense enough to turn into emolument, and determined to make a commodity of his distemper. He prudently exchanged the buskin for the sock, and the illusions instantly ceased ; or, if they occurred for a short season, by their very co-operation added a zest to his comic vein ; some of his most catching faces being (as he expresses it) little more than transcripts and copies of those extraordinary phantasmata.

We have now drawn out our hero's existence to the period when he was about to meet for the first time the sympathies of a London audience. The particulars of his success since have been too much before our eyes to render a circumstantial detail of them expedient. I shall only mention that Mr. Willoughby, his resentments having had time to subside, is at present one of the fastest friends of his old renegado factor ; and that Mr. Liston's hopes of Miss Parker vanishing along with his unsuccessful suit to Melpomene, in the autumn of 1811 he married his present lady, by whom he has been blest with one son, Philip ; and two daughters, Ann, and Augustina.

A VISION OF HORNS

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, New Series, vol. i, p. 29 (Jan., 1825); signed Elia. First collected in *Elia*. Second Series. Philadelphia: 1828.]

My thoughts had been engaged last evening in solving the problem, why in all times and places the *horn* had been agreed upon as the symbol, or honourable badge, of married men. Moses' horn, the horn of Ammon, of Amalthea, and a cornucopia of legends besides, came to my recollection, but afforded no satisfactory solution, or rather involved the question in deeper obscurity. Tired with the fruitless chase of inexplicant analogies, I fell asleep, and dreamed in this fashion.

Methought certain scales or films fell from my eyes, which had hitherto hindered these little tokens from being visible. I was somewhere in the Cornhill (as it might be termed) of some Utopia. Busy citizens jostled each other, as they may do in our streets, with care (the care of making a penny) written upon their foreheads; and *something else*, which is rather imagined, than distinctly imaged, upon the brows of my own friends and fellow-townsmen.

In my first surprise I supposed myself gotten into some forest—Arden, to be sure, or Sherwood; but the dresses and deportment, all civic, forbade me to continue in that delusion. Then a scriptural thought crossed me (especially as there were nearly as many Jews as Christians among them), whether it might not be the children of Israel going up to besiege Jericho. I was undeceived of both errors by the sight of many faces which were familiar to me. I found myself strangely (as it will happen in dreams) at one and the same time in an unknown country, with known companions. I met old friends, not with new faces, but with their old faces oddly adorned in front, with each man a certain corneous excrescence. Dick Mitis, the little cheesemonger in St. * * * *'s Passage, was the first that saluted me, with his hat off—you know Dick's way to a customer—and, I not being aware of him, he thrust a strange beam into my left eye, which pained and grieved me exceedingly; but, instead of apology, he only grinned and fleered in my

face, as much as to say, ' it is the custom of the country,' and passed on.

I had scarce time to send a civil message to his lady, whom I had always admired as a pattern of a wife,—and do indeed take Dick and her to be a model of conjugal agreement and harmony,—when I felt an ugly smart in my neck, as if something had gored it behind, and turning round, it was my old friend and neighbour, Dulcet, the confectioner, who, meaning to be pleasant, had thrust his protuberance right into my nape, and seemed proud of his power of offending.

Now I was assailed right and left, till in my own defence I was obliged to walk sideling and wary, and look about me, as you guard your eyes in London streets ; for the horns thickened, and came at me like the ends of umbrellas poking in one's face.

I soon found that these towns-folk were the civillest, best-mannered people in the world, and that if they had offended at all, it was entirely owing to their blindness. They do not know what dangerous weapons they protrude in front, and will stick their best friends in the eye with provoking complacency. Yet the best of it is, they can see the beams on their neighbours' foreheads, if they are as small as motes, but their own beams they can in no wise discern.

There was little Mitis, that I told you I just encountered —he has simply (I speak of him at home in his own shop) the smoothest forehead in his own conceit—he will stand you a quarter of an hour together contemplating the serenity of it in the glass, before he begins to shave himself in a morning—yet you saw what a desperate gash he gave me.

Desiring to be better informed of the ways of this extraordinary people, I applied myself to a fellow of some assurance, who (it appeared) acted as a sort of interpreter to strangers—he was dressed in a military uniform, and strongly resembled Colonel ——, of the guards ;—and ' pray, Sir ', said I, ' have all the inhabitants of your city these troublesome excrescences ? I beg pardon, I see you have none. You perhaps are single.' ' Truly, Sir,' he replied with a smile, ' for the most part we have, but not

all alike. There are some, like Dick, that sport but one tumescence. Their ladies have been tolerably faithful—have confined themselves to a single aberration or so—these we call Unicorns. Dick, you must know, is my Unicorn. [He spoke this with an air of invincible assurance.] Then we have Bicorns, Tricorns, and so on up to Millecorns. [Here methought I crossed and blessed myself in my dream.] Some again we have—there goes one—you see how happy the rogue looks—how he walks smiling, and perking up his face, as if he thought himself the only man. He is not married yet, but on Monday next he leads to the altar the accomplished widow Dacres, relict of our late sheriff.'

'I see, Sir,' said I, 'and observe that he is happily free from the national *goitre* (let me call it), which distinguishes most of your countrymen.'

'Look a little more narrowly,' said my conductor.

I put on my spectacles, and observing the man a little more diligently, above his forehead I could mark a thousand little twinkling shadows dancing the horn-pipe, little hornlets and rudiments of horn, of a soft and pappy consistence (for I handled some of them), but which, like coral out of water, my guide informed me would infallibly stiffen and grow rigid within a week or two from the expiration of his bachelorhood.

Then I saw some horns strangely growing out behind, and my interpreter explained these to be married men, whose wives had conducted themselves with infinite propriety since the period of their marriage, but were thought to have antedated their good men's titles, by certain liberties they had indulged themselves in, prior to the ceremony. This kind of gentry wore their horns backwards, as has been said, in the fashion of the old pig-tails; and as there was nothing obtrusive or ostentatious in them, nobody took any notice of it.

Some had pretty little budding antlers, like the first essays of a young faun. These, he told me, had wives, whose affairs were in a hopeful way, but not quite brought to a conclusion.

Others had nothing to show, only by certain red angry marks and swellings in the foreheads, which itched the more

they kept rubbing and chafing them; it was to be hoped that something was brewing.

I took notice that every one jeered at the rest, only none took notice of the sea-captains; yet these were as well provided with their tokens as the best among them. This kind of people, it seems, taking their wives upon so contingent tenures, their lot was considered as nothing but natural,—so they wore their marks without impeachment, as they might carry their cockades, and nobody respected them a whit the less for it.

I observed, that the more sprouts grew out of a man's head, the less weight they seemed to carry with them; whereas, a single token would now and then appear to give the wearer some uneasiness. This shows that use is a great thing.

Some had their adornings gilt, which needs no explanation; while others, like musicians, went sounding theirs before them—a sort of music which I thought might very well have been spared.

It was pleasant to see some of the citizens encounter between themselves; how they smiled in their sleeves at the shock they received from their neighbour, and none seemed conscious of the shock which their neighbour experienced in return.

Some had great corneous stumps, seemingly torn off and bleeding. These, the interpreter warned me, were husbands who had retaliated upon their wives, and the badge was in equity divided between them.

While I stood discerning these things, a slight tweak on my cheek unawares, which brought tears into my eyes, introduced to me my friend Placid, between whose lady and a certain male cousin, some idle flirtations I remember to have heard talked of; but that was all. He saw he had somehow hurt me, and asked my pardon with that round unconscious face of his, and looked so tristful and contrite for his no-offence, that I was ashamed for the man's penitence. Yet I protest it was but a scratch. It was the least little hornet of a horn that could be framed. 'Shame on the man,' I secretly exclaimed, 'who could thrust so much as the value of a hair into a brow so unsuspecting and inoffensive. What then must they have

to answer for, who plant great, monstrous, timberlike, projecting antlers upon the heads of those whom they call their friends, when a puncture of this atomical tenuity made my eyes to water at this rate. All the pincers at Surgeons' Hall cannot pull out for Placid that little hair.'

I was curious to know what became of these frontal excrescences, when the husbands died; and my guide informed me that the chemists in their country made a considerable profit by them, extracting from them certain subtle essences:—and then I remembered, that nothing was so efficacious in my own for restoring swooning matrons, and wives troubled with the vapours, as a strong sniff or two at the composition, appropriately called hartshorn—far beyond *sal volatile.*

Then also I began to understand, why a man, who is the jest of the company, is said to be the butt—as much as to say, such a one butteth with the horn.

I inquired if by no operation these wens were ever extracted; and was told, that there was indeed an order of dentists, whom they called canonists in their language, who undertook to restore the forehead to its pristine smoothness; but that ordinarily it was not done without much cost and trouble; and when they succeeded in plucking out the offending part, it left a painful void, which could not be filled up; and that many patients who had submitted to the excision, were eager to marry again, to supply with a good second antler the baldness and deformed gap left by the extraction of the former, as men losing their natural hair substitute for it a less becoming periwig.

Some horns I observed beautifully taper, smooth, and (as it were) flowering. These I understand were the portions brought by handsome women to their spouses; and I pitied the rough, homely, unsightly deformities on the brows of the others, who had been deceived by plain and ordinary partners. Yet the latter I observed to be by far the most common—the solution of which I leave to the natural philosopher.

One tribute of married men I particularly admired at, who, instead of horns, wore, engrafted on their forehead, a sort of hornbook. 'This', quoth my guide, 'is the

greatest mystery in our country, and well worth an explanation. You must know that all infidelity is not of the senses. We have as well intellectual, as material, wittols. These, whom you see decorated with the Order of the Book—are triflers, who encourage about their wives' presence the society of your men of genius (their good friends, as they call them)—literary disputants, who ten to one out-talk the poor husband, and commit upon the understanding of the woman a violence and estrangement in the end, little less painful than the coarser sort of alienation. Whip me these knaves—[my conductor here expressed himself with a becoming warmth]—whip me them, I say, who with no excuse from the passions, in cold blood seduce the minds, rather than the persons, of their friends' wives; who, for the tickling pleasure of hearing themselves prate, dehonestate the intellects of married women, dishonouring the husband in what should be his most sensible part. If I must be —— [here he used a plain word] let it be by some honest sinner like myself, and not by one of these gad-flies, these debauchers of the understanding, these flattery-buzzers.' He was going on in this manner, and I was getting insensibly pleased with my friend's manner (I had been a little shy of him at first), when the dream suddenly left me, vanishing—as Virgil speaks—through the gate of Horn.

ELIA.

THE ILLUSTRIOUS DEFUNCT [a]

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> Nought but a blank remains, a dead void space,
> A step of life that promised such a race.—DRYDEN.

NAPOLEON has now sent us back from the grave sufficient echoes of his living renown: the twilight of posthumous

[a] Since writing this article, we have been informed that the object of our funeral-oration is not definitively dead, but only moribund. So much the better; we shall have an opportunity of granting the request made to Walter by one of the children in the wood, and 'kill him two times'. The Abbé de Vertot having a siege to write, and not receiving the materials in time, composed the whole from his invention:

fame has lingered long enough over the spot where the sun of his glory set, and his name must at length repose in the silence, if not in the darkness of night. In this busy and evanescent scene, other spirits of the age are rapidly snatched away, claiming our undivided sympathies and regrets, until in turn they yield to some newer and more absorbing grief. Another name is now added to the list of the mighty departed, a name whose influence upon the hopes and fears, the fates and fortunes of our countrymen, has rivalled, and perhaps eclipsed that of the defunct 'child and champion of Jacobinism', while it is associated with all the sanctions of legitimate government, all the sacred authorities of social order and our most holy religion. We speak of one, indeed, under whose warrant heavy and incessant contributions were imposed upon our fellow-citizens, but who exacted nothing without the signet and the sign manual of most devout Chancellors of the Exchequer. Not to dally longer with the sympathies of our readers, we think it right to premonish them that we are composing an epicedium upon no less distinguished a personage than the Lottery, whose last breath, after many penultimate puffs, has been sobbed forth by sorrowing contractors, as if the world itself were about to be converted into a blank. There is a fashion of eulogy, as well as of vituperation; and though the Lottery stood for some time in the latter predicament, we hesitate not to assert that '*multis ille bonis flebilis occidit*'. Never have we joined in the senseless clamour which condemned the only tax whereto we became voluntary contributors, the only resource which gave the stimulus without the danger or infatuation of gambling, the only alembic which in these plodding days sublimised our imaginations, and filled them with more delicious dreams than ever flitted athwart the sensorium of Alnaschar.

Never can the writer forget when, as a child, he was hoisted upon a servant's shoulder in Guildhall, and looked down upon the installed and solemn pomp of the then drawing Lottery. The two awful cabinets of iron, upon

shortly after its completion, the expected documents arrived, when he threw them aside, exclaiming—'You are of no use to me now; I have carried the town.'

whose massy and mysterious portals, the royal initials were gorgeously emblazoned, as if after having deposited the unfulfilled prophecies within, the King himself had turned the lock and still retained the key in his pocket ;—the bluecoat boy, with his naked arm, first converting the invisible wheel, and then diving into the dark recess for a ticket ;—the grave and reverend faces of the commissioners eyeing the announced number ; —the scribes below calmly committing it to their huge books ;—the anxious countenances of the surrounding populace, while the giant figures of Gog and Magog, like presiding deities, looked down with a grim silence upon the whole proceeding,—constituted altogether a scene, which combined with the sudden wealth supposed to be lavished from those inscrutable wheels, was well calculated to impress the imagination of a boy with reverence and amazement. Jupiter, seated between the two fatal urns of good and evil, the blind Goddess with her cornucopia, the Parcæ wielding the distaff, the thread of life, and the abhorred shears, seemed but dim and shadowy abstractions of mythology, when I had gazed upon an assemblage exercising, as I dreamt, a not less eventful power, and all presented to me in palpable and living operation. Reason and experience, ever at their old spiteful work of catching and destroying the bubbles which youth delighted to follow, have indeed dissipated much of this illusion, but my mind so far retained the influence of that early impression, that I have ever since continued to deposit my humble offerings at its shrine whenever the ministers of the Lottery went forth with type and trumpet to announce its periodical dispensations ; and though nothing has been doled out to me from its undiscerning coffers but blanks, or those more vexatious tantalizers of the spirit, denominated small prizes, yet do I hold myself largely indebted to this most generous diffuser of universal happiness. Ingrates that we are ! are we to be thankful for no benefits that are not palpable to sense, to recognise no favours that are not of marketable value, to acknowledge no wealth unless it can be counted with the five fingers ? If we admit the mind to be the sole depositary of genuine joy, where is the bosom that has not been elevated into a temporary elysium by the magic

of the Lottery ? Which of us has not converted his ticket, or even his sixteenth share of one, into a nest-egg of Hope, upon which he has sate brooding in the secret roosting-places of his heart, and hatched it into a thousand fantastical apparitions ?

What a startling revelation of the passions if all the aspirations engendered by the Lottery could be made manifest ! Many an impecuniary epicure has gloated over his locked-up warrant for future wealth, as a means of realising the dream of his namesake in the Alchemist,—

> My meat shall all come in in Indian shells,
> Dishes of agate set in gold, and studded
> With emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths and rubies;
> The tongues of carps, dormice, and camels' heels
> Boil'd i' the spirit of Sol, and dissolved in pearl,
> (Apicius', diet 'gainst the epilepsy;)
> And I will eat these broths with spoons of amber,
> Headed with diamant and carbuncle.——
> My footboy shall eat pheasants, calvered salmons,
> Knots, godwits, lampreys; I myself will have
> The beards of barbels served:—instead of salads
> Oil'd mushrooms, and the swelling unctuous paps
> Of a fat pregnant sow, newly cut off,
> Dress'd with an exquisite and poignant sauce,
> For which I'll say unto my cook—'There 's gold,
> Go forth, and be a knight!'

Many a doating lover has kissed the scrap of paper whose promissory shower of gold was to give up to him his otherwise unattainable Danaë : Nimrods have transformed the same narrow symbol into a saddle, by which they have been enabled to bestride the backs of peerless hunters ; while nymphs have metamorphosed its Protean form into

> Rings, gaudes, conceits,
> Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats,

and all the braveries of dress, to say nothing of the obsequious husband, the two-footman'd carriage, and the opera-box. By the simple charm of this numbered and printed rag, gamesters have, for a time at least, recovered their losses, spendthrifts have cleared off mortgages from their estates, the imprisoned debtor has leapt over his lofty boundary of circumscription and restraint, and revelled in all the joys of liberty and fortune ; the cottage-walls have swelled out into more goodly proportions than

those of Baucis and Philemon; poverty has tasted the luxuries of competence, labour has lolled at ease in a perpetual arm-chair of idleness, sickness has been bribed into banishment, life has been invested with new charms, and death deprived of its former terrors. Nor have the affections been less gratified than the wants, appetites, and ambitions of mankind. By the conjurations of the same potent spell, kindred have lavished anticipated benefits upon one another, and charity upon all. Let it be termed a delusion; a fool's paradise is better than the wise man's Tartarus: be it branded as an Ignis fatuus, it was at least a benevolent one, which instead of beguiling its followers into swamps, caverns, and pitfalls, allured them on with all the blandishments of enchantment to a garden of Eden, an ever-blooming elysium of delight. True, the pleasures it bestowed were evanescent, but which of our joys are permanent? and who so inexperienced as not to know that anticipation is always of higher relish than reality, which strikes a balance both in our sufferings and enjoyments. 'The fear of ill exceeds the ill we fear,' and fruition, in the same proportion, invariably falls short of hope. 'Men are but children of a larger growth,' who may amuse themselves for a long time in gazing at the reflection of the moon in the water, but, if they jump in to grasp it, they may grope for ever, and only get the farther from their object. He is the wisest who keeps feeding upon the future, and refrains as long as possible from undeceiving himself, by converting his pleasant speculations into disagreeable certainties.

The true mental epicure always purchased his ticket early, and postponed enquiry into its fate to the last possible moment, during the whole of which intervening period he had an imaginary twenty thousand locked up in his desk,—and was not this well worth all the money? Who would scruple to give twenty pounds interest for even the ideal enjoyment of as many thousands during two or three months? '*Crede quod habes, et habes*,' and the usufruct of such a capital is surely not dear at such a price. Some years ago, a gentleman in passing along Cheapside saw the figures 1069, of which number he was the sole proprietor, flaming on the window of a lottery-

office as a capital prize. Somewhat flurried by this discovery, not less welcome than unexpected, he resolved to walk round St. Paul's that he might consider in what way to communicate the happy tidings to his wife and family; but upon repassing the shop, he observed that the number was altered to 10,069, and upon enquiry, had the mortification to learn that his ticket was a blank, and had only been stuck up in the window by a mistake of the clerk. This effectually calmed his agitation, but he always speaks of himself as having once possessed twenty thousand pounds, and maintains that his ten minutes' walk round St. Paul's was worth ten times the purchase-money of the ticket. A prize thus obtained has moreover this special advantage;—it is beyond the reach of fate, it cannot be squandered, bankruptcy cannot lay siege to it, friends cannot pull it down, nor enemies blow it up; it bears a charmed life, and none of woman born can break its integrity, even by the dissipation of a single fraction. Show me the property in these perilous times that is equally compact and impregnable. We can no longer become enriched for a quarter of an hour; we can no longer succeed in such splendid failures; all our chances of making such a miss have vanished with the last of the Lotteries.

Life will now become a flat, prosaic routine of matter-of-fact, and sleep itself, erst so prolific of numerical configurations and mysterious stimulants to lottery adventure, will be disfurnished of its figures and figments. People will cease to harp upon the one lucky number suggested in a dream, and which forms the exception, while they are scrupulously silent upon the ten thousand falsified dreams which constitute the rule. Morpheus will stifle Cocker with a handful of poppies, and our pillows will be no longer haunted by the book of numbers.

And who, too, shall maintain the art and mystery of puffing in all its pristine glory when the lottery professors shall have abandoned its cultivation? They were the first, as they will assuredly be the last, who fully developed the resources of that ingenious art; who cajoled and decoyed the most suspicious and wary reader into a perusal of their advertisements by devices of endless variety and cunning: who baited their lurking schemes with midnight

murders, ghost stories, crim-cons, bon-mots, balloons, dreadful catastrophes, and every diversity of joy and sorrow to catch newspaper-gudgeons. Ought not such talents to be encouraged? Verily the abolitionists have much to answer for!

And now, having established the felicity of all those who gained imaginary prizes, let us proceed to show that the equally numerous class who were presented with real blanks, have not less reason to consider themselves happy. Most of us have cause to be thankful for that which is bestowed, but we have all, probably, reason to be still more grateful for that which is withheld, and more especially for our being denied the sudden possession of riches. In the Litany indeed, we call upon the Lord to deliver us 'in all time of our wealth'; but how few of us are sincere in deprecating such a calamity! Massinger's Luke, and Ben Jonson's Sir Epicure Mammon, and Pope's Sir Balaam, and our own daily observation, might convince us that the devil 'now tempts by making rich, not making poor'. We may read in the Guardian a circumstantial account of a man who was utterly ruined by gaining a capital prize:—we may recollect what Dr. Johnson said to Garrick, when the latter was making a display of his wealth at Hampton Court,—'Ah, David! David! these are the things that make a death-bed terrible;'—we may recall the Scripture declaration, as to the difficulty a rich man finds in entering into the Kingdom of Heaven, and combining all these denunciations against opulence, let us heartily congratulate one another upon our lucky escape from the calamity of a twenty or thirty thousand pound prize! The fox in the fable, who accused the unattainable grapes of sourness, was more of a philosopher than we are generally willing to allow. He was an adept in that species of moral alchemy, which turns every thing to gold, and converts disappointment itself into a ground of resignation and content. Such we have shown to be the great lesson inculcated by the Lottery when rightly contemplated; and if we might parody M. de Chateaubriand's jingling expression,—'*le Roi est mort, vive le Roi*,' we should be tempted to exclaim, 'The Lottery is no more—long live the Lottery!'

UNITARIAN PROTESTS

In a Letter to a Friend of that Persuasion Newly Married

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Dear M——, Though none of your acquaintance can with greater sincerity congratulate you upon this happy conjuncture than myself, one of the oldest of them, it was with pain I found you, after the ceremony, depositing in the vestry-room what is called a Protest. I thought you superior to this little sophistry. What, after submitting to the service of the Church of England—after consenting to receive a boon from her, in the person of your amiable consort—was it consistent with sense, or common good manners, to turn round upon her, and flatly taunt her with false worship ? This language is a little of the strongest in your books and from your pulpits, though there it may well enough be excused from religious zeal and the native warmth of nonconformity. But at the altar—the Church of England altar—adopting her forms and complying with her requisitions to the letter—to be consistent, together with the practice, I fear, you must drop the language of dissent. You are no longer sturdy Non Cons ; you are there Occasional Conformists. You submit to accept the privileges communicated by a form of words, exceptionable, and perhaps justly, in your view ; but, so submitting, you have no right to quarrel with the ritual which you have just condescended to owe an obligation to. They do not force you into their churches. You come voluntarily, knowing the terms. You marry in the name of the Trinity. There is no evading this by pretending that you take the formula with your own interpretation, (and so long as you can do this, where is the necessity of Protesting ?) : for the meaning of a vow is to be settled by the sense of the imposer, not by any forced construction of the taker : else might all vows, and oaths too, be eluded with impunity. You marry then essentially as Trinitarians ; and the altar no sooner satisfied than, hey presto, with the celerity of

a juggler, you shift habits, and proceed pure Unitarians again in the vestry. You cheat the Church out of a wife, and go home smiling in your sleeves that you have so cunningly despoiled the Egyptians. In plain English, the Church has married you in the name of so and so, assuming that you took the words in her sense, but you outwitted her; you assented to them in your sense only, and took from her what, upon a right understanding, she would have declined to give you.

This is the fair construction to be put upon all Unitarian marriages as at present contracted; and as long as you Unitarians could salve your consciences with the equivoque, I do not see why the Established Church should have troubled herself at all about the matter. But the Protesters necessarily see further. They have some glimmerings of the deception; they apprehend a flaw somewhere; they would fain be honest, and yet they must marry notwithstanding; for honesty's sake, they are fain to dehonestate themselves a little. Let me try the very words of your own Protest, to see what confessions we can pick out of them.

'As Unitarians therefore we (you and your newly espoused bride) most solemnly protest against the service (which yourselves have just demanded) because we are thereby called upon, not only tacitly to acquiesce, but to profess a belief in a doctrine which is a dogma, as we believe, totally unfounded.' But do you profess that belief during the ceremony; or are you only called upon for the profession but do not make it? If the latter, then you fall in with the rest of your more consistent brethren, who waive the Protest; if the former, then, I fear, your Protest cannot save you.

Hard and grievous it is, that in any case an institution so broad and general as the union of man and wife should be so cramped and straitened by the hands of an imposing hierarchy, that to plight troth to a lovely woman a man must be necessitated to compromise his truth and faith to Heaven; but so it must be, so long as you chuse to marry by the forms of the Church over which that hierarchy presides.

Therefore, say you, we Protest. O poor and much

fallen word Protest! It was not so that the first heroic reformers protested. They departed out of Babylon once for good and all; they came not back for an occasional contact with her altars; a dallying, and then a protesting against dalliance; they stood not shuffling in the porch, with a Popish foot within, and its lame Lutheran fellow without, halting betwixt. These were the true Protestants, You are—Protesters.

Besides the inconsistency of this proceeding, I must think it a piece of impertinence—unseasonable at least, and out of place, to obtrude these papers upon the officiating clergyman—to offer to a public functionary an instrument which by the tenor of his function he is not obliged to accept, but, rather, he is called upon to reject. Is it done in his clerical capacity? he has no power of redressing the grievance. It is to take the benefit of his ministry and then insult him. If in his capacity of fellow Christian only, what are your scruples to him, so long as you yourselves are able to get over them, and do get over them by the very fact of coming to require his services? The thing you call a Protest might with just as good a reason be presented to the churchwarden for the time being, to the parish clerk, or the pew opener.

The Parliament alone can redress your grievance, if any. Yet I see not how with any grace your people can petition for relief, so long as, by the very fact of your coming to Church to be married, they do *bonâ fide* and strictly relieve themselves. The Upper House, in particular, is not unused to these same things called Protests, among themselves. But how would this honorable body stare to find a noble Lord conceding a measure, and in the next breath, by a solemn Protest disowning it. A Protest there is a reason given for non-compliance, not a subterfuge for an equivocal occasional compliance. It was reasonable in the primitive Christians to avert from their persons, by whatever lawful means, the compulsory eating of meats which had been offered unto idols. I dare say the Roman Prefects and Exarchats had plenty of petitioning in their days. But what would a Festus, or Agrippa, have replied to a petition to that effect, presented to him by some evasive Laodicean, with the very meat between his teeth, which he had been

chewing voluntarily rather than abide the penalty ? Relief for tender consciences means nothing, where the conscience has previously relieved itself ; that is, has complied with the injunctions which it seeks preposterously to be rid of. Relief for conscience there is properly none, but what by better information makes an act appear innocent and lawful, with which the previous conscience was not satisfied to comply. All else is but relief from penalties, from scandal incurred by a complying practice, where the conscience itself is not fully satisfied.

But, say you, we have hard measure ; the Quakers are indulged with the liberty denied to us. They have ; and dearly they have earned it. You have come in (as a sect at least) in the cool of the evening ; at the eleventh hour. The Quaker character was hardened in the fires of persecution in the seventeenth century ; not quite to the stake and faggot, but little short of that ; they grew up and thrived against noisome prisons, cruel beatings, whippings, stockings. They have since endured a century or two of scoffs, contempts ; they have been a bye-word, and a nay-word ; they have stood unmoved : and the consequence of long conscientious resistance on one part is invariably, in the end, remission on the other. The legislature, that denied you the tolerance, which I do not know that at that time you even asked, gave them the liberty which, without granting, they would have assumed. No penalties could have driven them into the Churches. This is the consequence of entire measures. Had the early Quakers consented to take oaths, leaving a Protest with the clerk of the court against them in the same breath with which they had taken them, do you in your conscience think that they would have been indulged at this day in their exclusive privilege of Affirming ? Let your people go on for a century or so, marrying in your own fashion, and I will warrant them before the end of it the legislature will be willing to concede to them more than they at present demand.

Either the institution of marriage depends not for its validity upon hypocritical compliances with the ritual of an alien Church ; and then I do not see why you cannot marry among yourselves, as the Quakers, without their indulgence, would have been doing to this day ; or it does

depend upon such ritual compliance, and then in your Protests you offend against a divine ordinance. I have read in the Essex-street Liturgy a form for the celebration of marriage. Why is this become a dead letter ? O ! it has never been legalised ; that is to say, in the law's eye it is no marriage. But do you take upon you to say, in the view of the gospel it would be none ? Would your own people at least look upon a couple so paired, to be none ? But the case of dowries, alimonies, inheritances, &c. which depend for their validity upon the ceremonial of the Church by law established—are these nothing ? That our children are not legally *Filii Nullius*—is this nothing ? I answer, nothing ; to the preservation of a good conscience, nothing ; to a consistent christianity, less than nothing. Sad worldly thorns they are indeed, and stumbling blocks, well worthy to be set out of the way by a legislature calling itself Christian ; but not likely to be removed in a hurry by any shrewd legislators, who perceive that the petitioning complainants have not so much as bruised a shin in the resistance ; but, prudently declining the briars and the prickles, nestle quietly down in the smooth two-sided velvet of a Protesting Occasional Conformity.—I am, dear sir,

With much respect, yours, &c.

ELIA.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MR. MUNDEN

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, New Series, vol. i, p. 231 (Feb., 1825). First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

HARK'EE, Mr. Editor. A word in your ear. They tell me you are going to put me in print—in print, Sir. To publish my life. What is my life to you, Sir ? What is it to you whether I ever lived at all ? My life is a very good life, Sir. I am insured at the Pelican, Sir. I am threescore years and six—six ; mark me, Sir : but I can play Polonius, which, I believe, few of your corre—correspondents can do, Sir. I suspect tricks, Sir : I smell a rat ; I do, I do. You would cog the die upon us ; you would, you would, Sir. But I will forestall you, Sir. You would

be deriving me from William the Conqueror, with a murrain to you. It is no such thing, Sir. The town shall know better, Sir. They begin to smoke your flams, Sir. Mr. Liston may be born where he pleases, Sir; but I will not be born at Lup—Lupton Magna, for any body's pleasure, Sir. My son and I have looked over the great map of Kent together, and we can find no such place as you would palm upon us, Sir; palm upon us, I say. Neither Magna nor Parva, as my son says, and he knows Latin, Sir; Latin. If you write my life true, Sir, you must set down, that I, Joseph Munden, comedian, came into the world upon All-hallows' day, Anno Domini, 1759—1759; no sooner nor later, Sir: and I saw the first light—the first light, remember, Sir, at Stoke Pogis—Stoke Pogis, comitatu Bucks, and not at Lup—Lup Magna, which I believe to be no better than moonshine—moonshine; do you mark me, Sir? I wonder you can put such flim flams upon us, Sir; I do, I do. It does not become you, Sir; I say it—I say it. And my father was an honest tradesman, Sir: he dealt in malt and hops, Sir, and was a Corporation man, Sir, and of the Church of England, Sir, and no Presbyterian; nor Ana—Anabaptist, Sir, however you may be disposed to make honest people believe to the contrary, Sir. Your bams are found out, Sir. The town will be your stale puts no longer, Sir; and you must not send us jolly fellows, Sir—we that are comedians, Sir,—you must not send us into groves and Char—Charnwoods, a moping, Sir. Neither Charns, nor charnel houses, Sir. It is not our constitutions, Sir. I tell it you—I tell it you. I was a droll dog from my cradle. I came into the world tittering, and the midwife tittered, and the gossips spilt their caudle with tittering. And when I was brought to the font, the parson could not christen me for tittering. So I was never more than half baptized. And when I was little Joey, I made 'em all titter;—there was not a melancholy face to be seen in Pogis. Pure nature, Sir. I was born a comedian. Old Screwup, the undertaker, could tell you, Sir, if he were living. Why, I was obliged to be locked up every time there was to be a funeral at Pogis. I was—I was, Sir. I used to *grimace* at the mutes, as he called it, and put 'em out with my mops and my mows, till they couldn't stand

at a door for me. And when I was locked up, with nothing but a cat in my company, I followed my bent with trying to make her laugh, and sometimes she would, and sometimes she would not. And my schoolmaster could make nothing of me: I had only to thrust my tongue in my cheek—in my cheek, Sir—and the rod dropped from his fingers: and so my education was limited, Sir. And I grew up a young fellow, and it was thought convenient to enter me upon some course of life that should make me serious; but it wouldn't do, Sir. And I was articled to a drysalter. My father gave forty pounds premium with me, Sir. I can show the indent—dent—dentures, Sir. But I was born to be a comedian, Sir: so I ran away, and listed with the players, Sir; and I topt my parts at Amersham and Gerrard's Cross, and played my own father to his face, in his own town of Pogis, in the part of Gripe, when I was not full seventeen years of age, and he did not know me again, but he knew me afterwards; and then he laughed, and I laughed, and, what is better, the drysalter laughed, and gave me up my articles for the joke's sake: so that I came into court afterwards with clean hands—with clean hands—do you see, Sir?

[Here the manuscript becomes illegible for two or three sheets onwards, which we presume to be occasioned by the absence of Mr. Munden, jun. who clearly transcribed it for the press thus far. The rest (with the exception of the concluding paragraph, which seemingly is resumed in the first hand writing) appears to contain a confused account of some lawsuit, in which the elder Munden was engaged; with a circumstantial history of the proceedings on a case of Breach of Promise of Marriage, made to or by (we cannot pick out which) Jemima Munden, spinster, probably the comedian's cousin, for it does not appear he had any sister; with a few dates, rather better preserved, of this great actor's engagements—as 'Cheltenham (spelt Cheltnam) 1776'; 'Bath, 1779'; 'London, 1789'; together with stage anecdotes of Messrs. Edwin, Wilson, Lee Lewis, &c. over which we have strained our eyes to no purpose, in the hope of presenting something amusing to the public. Towards the end the manuscript brightens up a little, as we have said, and concludes in the following manner.]

—— stood before them for six and thirty years, [we suspect that Mr. Munden is here speaking of his final leave-taking of the stage] and to be dismissed at last. But I was heart-whole, heart-whole to the last, Sir. What though a few drops did course themselves down the old veteran's cheeks; who could help it, Sir? I was a giant that night, Sir; and could have played fifty parts, each as arduous as Dozy. My faculties were never better, Sir. But I was to be laid upon the shelf. It did not suit the public to laugh with their old servant any longer, Sir. [Here some moisture has blotted a sentence or two.] But I can play Polonius still, Sir; I can, I can.

Your servant, Sir,

JOSEPH MUNDEN.

THE 'LEPUS' PAPERS

[Printed in *The New Times*, Jan. 8, 1825. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

I.—MANY FRIENDS

UNFORTUNATE is the lot of that man, who can look round about the wide world, and exclaim with truth, *I have no friend!* Do you know any such lonely sufferer? For mercy sake send him to me. I can afford him plenty. He shall have them good cheap. I have enough and to spare. Truly society is the balm of human life. But you may take a surfeit from sweetest odours administered to satiety. Hear my case, dear VARIORUM, and pity me. I am an elderly gentleman—not old—a sort of middle-aged-gentleman-and-a-half—with a tolerable larder, cellar, &c.; and a most unfortunately easy temper for the callous front of impertinence to try conclusions on. My day times are entirely engrossed by the business of a public office, where I am any thing but alone from nine till five. I have forty fellow-clerks about me during those hours; and, though the human face be divine, I protest that so many human faces seen every day do very much diminish the homage I am willing to pay to that divinity. It fares with these divine resemblances as with a Polytheism. Multiply the object and you infallibly enfeeble the adoration.

'What a piece of work is Man! how excellent in faculty,' &c. But a great many men together—a hot huddle of rational creatures—Hamlet himself would have lowered his contemplation a peg or two in my situation. *Tœdet me harum quotidianarum formarum.* I go home every day to my late dinner, absolutely famished and face-sick. I am sometimes fortunate enough to go off unaccompanied. The relief is restorative like sleep; but far oftener, alas! some one of my fellows, who lives *my way* (as they call it) does me the sociality of walking with me. He sees me to the door; and now I figure to myself a snug fire-side—comfortable meal—a respiration from the burthen of society—and the blessedness of a single knife and fork. I sit down to my solitary mutton, happy as Adam when a bachelor. I have not swallowed a mouthful, before a startling ring announces the visit of *a friend.* O! for an everlasting muffle upon that appalling instrument of torture! A knock makes me nervous; but a ring is a positive fillip to all the sour passions of my nature:—and yet such is my effeminacy of temperament, I neither tie up the one nor dumbfound the other. But these accursed friends, or fiends, that torture me thus! They come in with a full consciousness of their being unwelcome—with a sort of grin of triumph over your weakness. My soul sickens within when they enter. I can scarcely articulate a 'how d'ye'. My digestive powers fail. I have enough to do to maintain them in any healthiness when alone. Eating is a solitary function; you may drink in company. Accordingly the bottle soon succeeds; and such is my infirmity, that the reluctance soon subsides before it. The visitor becomes agreeable. I find a great deal that is good in him; wonder I should have felt such aversion on his first entrance; we get chatty, conversible; insensibly comes midnight; and I am dismissed to the cold bed of celibacy (the only place, alas! where I am suffered to be alone) with the reflection that another day has gone over my head without the possibility of enjoying my own free thoughts in solitude even for a solitary moment. O for a Lodge in some vast wilderness! the den of those Seven Sleepers (conditionally the other six were away)—a *Crusoe* solitude!

What most disturbs me is, that my chief annoyers are

mostly young men.. Young men, let them think as they please, are no company *singly* for a gentleman of my years. They do mighty well in a mixed society, and where there are females to take them off, as it were. But to have the load of one of them to one's own self for successive hours conversation is unendurable.

There was my old friend Captain Beacham—he died some six years since, bequeathing to my friendship three stout young men, his sons, and seven girls, the tallest in the land. Pleasant, excellent young women they were, and for their sakes I did, and could endure much. But they were too tall. I am superstitious in that respect, and think that to a just friendship, something like proportion in stature as well as mind is desirable. Now I am five feet and a trifle more. Each of these young women rose to six, and one exceeded by two inches. The brothers are proportionably taller. I have sometimes taken the altitude of this friendship ; and on a modest computation I may be said to have known at one time a whole furlong of Beachams. But the young women are married off, and dispersed among the provinces. The brothers are left. Nothing is more distasteful than these relics and parings of past friendships—unmeaning records of agreeable hours flown. There are three of them. If they hunted in triples, or even couples, it were something ; but by a refinement of persecution, they contrive to come singly ; and so spread themselves out into three evenings' molestation in a week. Nothing is so distasteful as the sight of their long legs, couched for continuance upon my fender. They have been mates of Indiamen ; and one of them in particular has a story of a shark swallowing a boy in the bay of Calcutta. I wish the shark had swallowed *him*. Nothing can be more useless than their conversation to me, unless it is mine to them. We have no ideas (save of eating and drinking) in common. The shark story has been told till it cannot elicit a spark of attention ; but it goes on just as usual. When I try to introduce a point of literature, or common life, the mates gape at me. When I fill a glass, they fill one too. Here is sympathy. And for this poor correspondency of having a gift of swallowing and retaining liquor in common with my fellow-creatures, I am to be

tied up to an ungenial intimacy, abhorrent from every sentiment, and every sympathy besides. But I cannot break the bond. They are sons of my old friend.

LEPUS.

II.—READERS AGAINST THE GRAIN

[Printed in *The New Times*, Jan. 13, 1825. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

No one can pass through the streets, alleys, and blindest thoroughfares of this Metropolis, without surprise at the number of shops opened everywhere for the sale of cheap publications—not blasphemy and sedition—nor altogether flimsy periodicals, though the latter abound to a surfeit—but I mean fair re-prints of good old books. Fielding, Smollett, the Poets, Historians, are daily becoming accessible to the purses of poor people. I cannot behold this result from the enlargement of the reading public without congratulations to my country. But as every blessing has its wrong side, it is with aversion I behold springing up with this phenomenon a race of *Readers against the grain*. Young men who thirty years ago would have been playgoers, punch-drinkers, cricketers, &c. with one accord are now—Readers!—a change in some respects, perhaps, salutary; but I liked the old way best. Then people read because they liked reading. He must have been indigent indeed, and, as times went then, probably unable to enjoy a book, who from one little circulating library or another (those slandered benefactions to the public) could not pick out an odd volume to satisfy the intervals of the workshop and the desk. Then if a man told you that he 'loved reading mightily, but had no books', you might be sure that in the first assertion at least he was mistaken. Neither had he, perhaps, the materials that should enliven a punch-bowl in his own cellar; but if the rogue loved his liquor, he would quickly find out where the arrack, the lemons, and the sugar dwelt—he would speedily find out the circulating shop for them. I will illustrate this from my own observation. It may detract a little from the gentility of your columns when I tell your Readers that I am —what I hinted at in my last—a Bank Clerk. Three and

thirty years ago, when I took my first station at the desk, out of as many fellows in office one or two there were that had read a little. One could give a pretty good account of the *Spectator*. A second knew *Tom Jones*. A third recommended *Telemachus*. One went so far as to quote *Hudibras*, and was looked on as a phenomenon. But the far greater number neither cared for books, nor affected to care. They were, as I said, in their leisure hours, cricketers, punch-drinkers, play-goers, and the rest. Times are altered now. We are all readers; our young men are split up into so many book-clubs, knots of literati; we criticise; we read the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh*, I assure you; and instead of the old, honest, unpretending illiterature so becoming to our profession—we read and *judge* of every thing. I have something to do in these book-clubs, and know the trick and mystery of it. Every new publication that is likely to make a noise, must be had at any rate. By some they are devoured with avidity. These would have been readers in the old time I speak of. The only loss is, that for the good old reading of Addison or Fielding's days is substituted that never-ending flow of thin novelties which are kept up like a ball, leaving no possible time for better things, and threatening in the issue to bury or sweep away from the earth the memory of their nobler predecessors. We read to say that we have read. No reading can keep pace with the writing of this age, but we pant and toil after it as fast as we can. I smile to see an honest lad, who ought to be at trap-ball, laboring up hill against this giant load, taking his toil for a pleasure, and with that utter incapacity for reading which *betrays itself by a certain silent movement of the lips when the reader reads to himself*, undertaking the infinite contents of fugitive poetry, or travels, what not—to see them with their snail pace undertaking so vast a journey as might make faint a giant's speed; keeping a volume, which a real reader would get through in an hour, three, four, five, six days, and returning it with the last leaf but one folded down. These are your readers against the grain, who yet *must* read or be thought nothing of—who, crawling through a book with tortoise-pace, go creeping to the next Review to learn what they shall say of it. Upon my soul, I pity

the honest fellows mightily. The self-denials of virtue are nothing to the patience of these self tormentors. If I hate one day before another, it is the accursed first day of the month, when a load of periodicals is ushered in and distributed to feed the reluctant monster. How it gapes and takes in its prescribed diet, as little savoury as that which Daniel ministered to that Apocryphal dragon, and not more wholesome! Is there no stopping the eternal wheels of the Press for a half century or two, till the nation recover its senses? Must we *magazine* it and *review* [it] at this sickening rate for ever? Shall we never again read to be *amused?* but to judge, to criticise, to talk about it and about it? Farewel, old honest delight taken in books not quite contemporary, before this plague-token of modern endless novelties broke out upon us—farewel to reading for its own sake!

Rather than follow in the train of this insatiable monster of modern reading, I would forswear my spectacles, play at put, mend pens, kill fleas, stand on one leg, shell peas, or do whatsoever ignoble diversion you shall put me to. Alas! I am hurried on in the vortex. I die of new books, or the everlasting talk about them. I faint of Longman's I sicken of the Constables. Blackwood and Cadell have me by the throat.

I will go and relieve myself with a page of honest John Bunyan, or Tom Brown. Tom anybody will do, so long as they are not of this whiffling century.

Your Old-fashioned Correspondent,

LEPUS.

III.—MORTIFICATIONS OF AN AUTHOR

[Printed in *The New Times*, Jan. 31, 1825. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

If you have a son or a daughter inclinable to the folly of Authorship, pray warn them by my example of the mortifications which are the constant attendants upon it. I do not advert to the trite instances of unfair and malignant *reviewing*, though that is not nothing—but to the mortifications they may expect from their friends and common acquaintance. I have been a dabbler this way, and cannot

resist flinging out my thoughts occasionally in periodical publications. I was the chief support of the * * * * * * * * * Magazine while it lasted, under the signature of OLINDO. All my friends guessed, or rather knew, who OLINDO was; but I never knew one who did not take a pleasure in affecting to be ignorant of it. One would ask me, whether I had read that clever article in the * * * * * * * * * Magazine of this month (and here I began to prick up my ears) signed 'ZEKIEL HOMESPUN'.—(Then my ears would flap down again.)—Another would praise the verses of 'X. Y. Z.'; a third stood up for the 'Gipsy Stranger'; a long rambling tale in prose, with all the lengthiness, and none of the fine-heartedness and gush of soul of A——n C——m to recommend it. But never in a single instance was Olindo ever hinted at. I have sifted, I have pumped them (as the vulgar phrase is) till my heart ached, to extort a pittance of acknowledgment. I have descended to arts below any animal but *an Author*, who is veritably the meanest of Heaven's creatures, and my vanity has returned upon myself ungratified, to choke me. When I could bear their silence no longer and have ventured to ask them how they liked 'such a Paper'; a cold, 'O! was that yours?' is the utmost I ever obtained from them. A fellow sits at my desk this morning, spelling *The New Times* over from head to tail, and I know that he will purposely skip over this article, because he suspects me to be LEPUS. So confident am I of this, and of his deliberate purpose to torment me, that I have a great mind to give you his character—knowing that he will not read it—but I forbear him at present. They have two ways of doing it. 'The * * * * * * * * * Magazine is very sprightly this month, Anticlericus has some good hits, the Old Baker is capital,' and so forth. Or the same Magazine is 'unusually dull this month', especially when Olindo happens to have an article better or longer than usual. I publish a book now and then. In the very nick of its novelty, the honey moon, as it were—when with pride I have placed my bantling on my own shelves in company with its betters, a friend will drop in, and ask me if I have anything new; then, carefully eluding mine, he will take down *The Angel of the World*, or *Barry Cornwall*, and beg me to lend it him.

'He is particularly careful of new books.' But he never borrows *me*. To one Lady I lent a little Novel of mine, a thing of about two hours' reading at most, and she returned it after five weeks' keeping, with an apology that she had 'so small time for reading'. I found it doubled down at the last leaf but one—just at the crisis of what I conceived to be a very affecting catastrophe. O if you *write*, dear Reader, keep the secret inviolable from your most familiar friends. Do not let your own father, brother, or your uncle, know it: not even your wife. I know a Lady who prides herself upon 'not reading any of her husband's publications', though she swallows all the trash she can pick up besides; and yet her husband in the world's eye is a very respectable author, and has written some Novels in particular that are in high estimation. Write—and all your friends will hate you—all will suspect you. Are you happy in drawing a character? Shew it not for yours. Not one of your acquaintance but will surmise that you meant him or her—no matter how discordant from their own. Let it be diametrically different, their fancy will extract from it some lines of a likeness. I lost a friend—a most valuable one, by shewing him a whimsical draught of a miser. He himself is remarkable for generosity, even to carelessness in money matters; but there was an expression in it, out of Juvenal, about an attic—a place where pigeons are fed; and my friend kept pigeons. All the waters in the Danube cannot wash it out of his pate to this day, but that in my miser I was making reflections upon *him*. To conclude, no creature is so craving after applause, and so starved and famished for it, as an author: none so pitiful, and so little pitied. He sets himself up *prima facie* as something different from his brethren, and they never forgive him. 'Tis the fable of the little birds hooting at the bird of Pallas.

LEPUS.

IV.—TOM PRY

[Printed in *The New Times*, Feb. 8, 1825. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

My friend TOM PRY is a kind, warm-hearted fellow, with no one failing in the world but an excess of the passion

of *Curiosity*. He knows every body's name, face, and domestic affairs. He scents out a match three months before the parties themselves are quite agreed about it. Like the man in the play, *homo est* and no human interest escapes him. I have sometime wondered how he gets all his information. Mere inquisitiveness would not do his business. Certainly the bodily make has much to do with the character. The auricular organs in my friend Tom do not lie flapping against his head as with common mortals, but they perk up like those of a hare at form. The lowest sound cannot elude him. Every parlour and drawing-room is to him a whispering gallery. His own name, pronounced in the utmost compression of susurration, they say, he catches at a quarter furlong interval. I suspect sometimes that the faculty of hearing with him is analogous to the scent in some animals. He seems hung round with ears, like the pagan emblem of Fame, and to imbibe sounds at every pore. You cannot take a walk of business or pleasure, but you are taxed with it by him next morning, with some shrewd guess at the purpose of it. You dread him as you would an inquisitor, or the ubiquitarian power of the old Secret Tribunal. He is the bird of the air, who sees the matter. He has lodgings at a corner house, which looks out four ways; and though you go a roundabout way to evade his investigation, you are somehow seen notwithstanding. He sees at multiplied angles. He is a sort of second memory to all his friends, an excellent refresher to a dull or oblivious conscience; for he can repeat to you at any given time all that ever you have done in your life. He should have been a death-bed confessor. His appetite for information is omnivorous. To get at the *name* only of a stranger whom he passes in the street, he counts a Godsend; what further he can pick up is a luxury. His friends joke with him about his innocent propensity, but the bent of nature is too deeply burned in to be removed with such forks. *Usque recurrit.* I myself in particular had been rallying him pretty sharply one day upon the foible, and it seemed to impress him a little. He asked no more questions that morning. But walking with him in St. James's Park in the evening, we met an old Gentleman unknown to him, who bowed to me. I could see that Tom

kept his passion within with great struggles. Silence was observed for ten minutes, and I was congratulating myself on my friend's mastery over this inordinate appetite of knowing every thing, when we had not past the Queen's gate a pace or two, but the fire burnt within him, and he said, as if with indifference, 'By the way, who was that friend of yours who bowed to you just now?' He has a place in the Post-office, which I think he chose for the pleasure of reading superscriptions. He is too honorable a man, I am sure, to get clandestinely at the contents of a letter not addressed to him, but the outside he cannot resist. It tickles him. He plays about the flame, as it were; contents himself with a superficial caress, when he can get at nothing more substantial. He has a handsome seal, which he keeps to proffer to such of his friends as have not one in readiness, when they would fold up an epistle; nay, he will seal it for you, and pays himself by discovering the direction. As I have no directionary secrets, I generally humour him with pretending to have left my seal at home (though I carry a rich gold one, which was my grandfather's, always about me), to gratify his harmless inclination. He is the cleverest of sealing a letter of any man I ever knew, and turns out the cleanest impressions. It is a neat but slow operation with him—he has so much more time to drink in the direction. With all this curiosity, he is the finest tempered fellow in the world. You may banter him from morning to night, but never ruffle his temper. We sometimes raise reports to mislead him, as that such a one is going to be married next month, &c.; but he has an instinct, as I called it before, which prevents his yielding to the imposition. He distinguishes *at hearing* between giddy rumour and steady report. He listens with dignity, and his prying is without credulity.

LEPUS.

V.—TOM PRY'S WIFE

[Printed in *The New Times*, Feb. 28, 1825. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

You say you were diverted with my description of the 'Curious Man'. Tom is in some respects an amusing character enough, but then it is by no means uncommon.

But what power of words can paint Tom's wife? My pencil faulters while I attempt it. But I am ambitious that the portraits should hang side by side: they may set off one another. Tom's passion for knowledge in the *pursuit* is intense and restless, but when satisfied it sits down and seeks no further. He must know all about every thing, but his desires terminate in mere science. Now as far as the *pure mathematics*, as they are called, transcend the *practical*, so far does Tom's curiosity, to my mind, in elegance and disinterestedness, soar above the craving, gnawing, *mercenary* (if I may so call it) inquisitiveness of his wife.

Mrs. Priscilla Pry must not only know all about your private concerns, but be as deeply concerned herself for them: she will pluck at the very heart of your mystery. She must anatomise and skin you, absolutely lay your feelings bare. Her passions are reducible to two, but those are stronger in her than in any human creature—*pity* and *envy*. I will try to illustrate it. She has intimacy with two families—the Grimstones and the Gubbins's. The former are sadly pinched to live, the latter are in splendid circumstances: the former tenant an obscure third floor in Devereux Court, the latter occupy a stately mansion in May-fair. I have accompanied her to both these domiciles. She will burst into the incommodious lodging of poor Grimstone and his wife at some unseasonable hour, when they are at their meagre dinner, with a 'Bless me! what a dark passage you have! I could hardly find my way up stairs! Isn't there a drain somewhere? Well, I like to see you at your *little* bit of mutton!' But her treat is to catch them at a meal of solitary potatoes. Then does her sympathy burgeon, and bud out into a thousand flowers of rhetorical pity and wonder; and it is trumpeted out afterwards to all her acquaintance, that the poor Grimstones were 'making a dinner without flesh yesterday'. The word *poor* is her favorite; the word (on my conscience) is endeared to her beyond any monosyllable in the language. Poverty, in the tone of her compassion, is somehow doubled; it is emphatically what a dramatist, with some licence, has called *poor poverty*. It is stark-naked *indigence* and never in her mind connected with any mitiga-

ting circumstances of self-respect and independence in the owner, which give to poverty a dignity. It is an object of pure pity, and nothing else. This is her first way. Change we the scene to May-fair and the Gubbins's. Suppose it a morning call :—

'Bless me !—(for she equally blesses herself against want and abundance)—what a style you *do* live in ! what elegant curtains ! You must have a great income to afford all these things. I wonder you can ever visit such poor folks as we ! '—with more to the same purpose, which I must cut short, not to be tedious. She pumps all her friends to know the exact income of all her friends. Such a one must have a great salary. Do you think he has as much as eight hundred a year—seven hundred and fifty perhaps ? A wag once told her I had fourteen hundred—(Heaven knows we Bank Clerks, though with no reason to complain, in few cases realise that luxury)—and the fury of her wonder, till I undeceived her, nearly worked her spirits to a fever. Now Pry is equally glad to get at his friends' circumstances ; but his curiosity is disinterested, as I said, and passionless. No emotions are consequent upon the satisfaction of it. He is a philosopher who loves knowledge for its own sake ; she is not content with a *lumen siccum* (dry knowledge, says Bacon, is best) ; the success of her researches is nothing, but as it feeds the two main springs between which her soul is kept in perpetual conflict—Pity, and Envy.

LEPUS.

VI.—A CHARACTER

[Printed in *The New Times*, Aug. 25, 1825. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

A desk at the Bank of England is *prima facie* not the point in the world that seems best adapted for an insight into the characters of men ; yet something may be gleaned from the barrenest soil. There is EGOMET, for instance. By the way, how pleasant it is to string up one's acquaintance thus, ni the grumbler's corner of some newspaper, and for them to know nothing at all about it ; nay, for them to read their own characters and suspect nothing of the matter. Blessings on the writer who first made use

of Roman names. It is only calling Tomkins—Caius ; and Jenkins—Titus ; or whipping Hopkins upon the back of Scævola, and you have the pleasure of executing sentence with no pain to the offender. This hanging in effigy is delightful ; it evaporates the spleen without souring the blood, and is altogether the most gentlemanly piece of Jack-Ketchery imaginable.

Egomet, then, has been my desk-fellow for thirty years. He is a remarkable species of selfishness. I do not mean that he is attentive to his own gain ; I acquit him of that common-place manifestation of the foible. I shoot no such small deer. But his sin is a total absorption of mind in things relating to himself—*his* house—*his* horse—*his* stable—*his* gardener, &c. Nothing that concerns himself can he imagine to be indifferent to you.—He does my sympathy too much honour. The worst is, he takes no sort of interest whatever in *your* horse, house, stable, gardener, &c. If you begin a discourse about your own household economy and small matters, he treats it with the most mortifying indifference. He has discarded all pronouns for the first-personal. His inattention, or rather aversion, to hear, is no more than what is a proper return to a self-important babbler of his own little concerns ; but then, if he will not give, why should he expect to receive, a hearing ? ' There is no reciprocity in this.'

There is an egotism of vanity ; but his is not that species either. He is not vain of any talent, or indeed properly of any thing he possesses ; but his doings and sayings, his little pieces of good or ill luck, the sickness of his maid, the health of his pony, the question whether he shall ride or walk home to-day to Clapham, the shape of his hat or make of his boot ; his poultry, and how many eggs they lay daily—are the never-ending topics of his talk. *Your* goose might lay golden eggs without exciting in him a single curiosity to hear about it.

He is alike throughout ; his large desk, which abuts on mine—*nimium vicini*, alas ! is a vast lumber chest composed of every scrap of most insignificant paper, even to dinner invitation cards, every fragment that has been addressed to him, or in any way has concerned himself. My elbow aches with being perpetually in the way of his sudden

jerking it up, which he does incessantly to hunt for some worthless scrap of the least possible self-reference; this he does without notice, and without ceremony. I should like to make a bonfire of the ungainful mass—but I should not like it either; with it would fall down at once all the structure of his pride—his fane of Diana, his treasure, his calling, the business he came into the world to do.

I said before, he is not avaricious—not egotistical in the vain sense of the word either; therefore the term selfishness, or egotism, is improperly applied to his distemper; it is the sin of self-fullness. Neither is himself, properly speaking, an object of his contemplation at all; it is the things, which belong or refer to himself. His conversation is one entire soliloquy; or it may be said to resemble Robinson Crusoe's self-colloquies in his island: you are the parrot sitting by. Begin a story, however modest, of your own concerns (something of real interest perhaps), and the little fellow contracts and curls up into his little self immediately, and, with shut ears, sits unmoved, self-centered, as remote from your joys or sorrows as a Pagod or a Lucretian Jupiter.

LEPUS.

REFLECTIONS IN THE PILLORY

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, New Series, vol. i, p. 368 (March, 1825). First collected in *Elia. Second Series.* Philadelphia: 1828.]

[ABOUT the year 18—, one R——d, a respectable London merchant (since dead), stood in the pillory for some alleged fraud upon the Revenue. Among his papers were found the following 'Reflections', which we have obtained by favour of our friend Elia, who knew him well, and had heard him describe the train of his feelings upon that trying occasion almost in the words of the MS. Elia speaks of him as a man (with the exception of the peccadillo aforesaid) of singular integrity in all his private dealings, possessing great suavity of manner, with a certain turn for humour. As our object is to present human nature under every possible circumstance, we do not think that we shall sully our pages by inserting it.—*Editor.*]

Scene, opposite the Royal Exchange
Time, Twelve to One, Noon

Ketch, my good fellow, you have a neat hand. Prithee, adjust this new collar to my neck, gingerly. I am not used to these wooden cravats. There, softly, softly. That seems the exact point between ornament and strangulation. A thought looser on this side. Now it will do. And have a care in turning me, that I present my aspect due vertically. I now face the orient. In a quarter of an hour I shift southward—do you mind ?—and so on till I face the east again, travelling with the sun. No half-points, I beseech you ; N.N. by W. or any such elaborate niceties. They become the shipman's card, but not this mystery. Now leave me a little to my own reflections.

Bless us, what a company is assembled in honour of me ! How grand I stand here ! I never felt so sensibly before the effect of solitude in a crowd. I muse in solemn silence upon that vast miscellaneous rabble in the pit there. From my private box I contemplate with mingled pity and wonder the gaping curiosity of those underlings. There are my Whitechapel supporters. Rosemary Lane has emptied herself of the very flower of her citizens to grace my show. Duke's place sits desolate. What is there in my face, that strangers should come so far from the east to gaze upon it ? [*Here an egg narrowly misses him.*] That offering was well meant, but not so cleanly executed. By the tricklings, it should not be either myrrh or frankincence. Spare your presents, my friends ; I am no-ways mercenary. I desire no missive tokens of your approbation. I am past those valentines. Bestow these coffins of untimely chickens upon mouths that water for them. Comfort your addle spouses with them at home, and stop the mouths of your brawling brats with such Olla Podridas ; they have need of them. [*A brick is let fly.*] Discase not, I pray you, nor dismantle your rent and ragged tenements, to furnish me with architectural decorations, which I can excuse. This fragment might have stopped a flaw against snow comes. [*A coal flies.*] Cinders are dear, gentlemen. This nubbling might have helped the pot boil, when your dirty cuttings from the shambles at three ha'-pence a pound shall stand

at a cold simmer. Now, south about, Ketch. I would enjoy australian popularity.

What my friends from over the water! Old benchers—flies of a day—ephemeral Romans—welcome! Doth the sight of me draw souls from limbo? Can it dispeople purgatory—ha!

What am I, or what was my father's house, that I should thus be set up a spectacle to gentlemen and others? Why are all faces, like Persians at the sun-rise, bent singly on mine alone? It was wont to be esteemed an ordinary visnomy, a quotidian merely. Doubtless, these assembled myriads discern some traits of nobleness, gentility, breeding, which hitherto have escaped the common observation—some intimations, as it were, of wisdom, valour, piety, and so forth. My sight dazzles; and, if I am not deceived by the too familiar pressure of this strange neckcloth that envelopes it, my countenance gives out lambent glories. For some painter now to take me in the lucky point of expression!—the posture so convenient—the head never shifting, but standing quiescent in a sort of natural frame. But these artizans require a westerly aspect. Ketch, turn me.

Something of St. James's air in these my new friends. How my prospects shift, and brighten! Now if Sir Thomas Lawrence be any where in that group, his fortune is made for ever. I think I see some one taking out a crayon. I will compose my whole face to a smile, which yet shall not so predominate, but that gravity and gaiety shall contend as it were—you understand me? I will work up my thoughts to some mild rapture—a gentle enthusiasmus—which the artist may transfer in a manner warm to the canvas. I will inwardly apostrophize my tabernacle.

Delectable mansion, hail! House, not made of every wood! Lodging, that pays no rent; airy and commodious; which, owing no window tax, art yet all casement, out of which men have such pleasure in peering and overlooking, that they will sometimes stand an hour together to enjoy thy prospects! Cell, recluse from the vulgar! Quiet retirement from the great Babel, yet affording sufficient glimpses into it! Pulpit, that instructs without note or sermon-book, into which the preacher is inducted

without tenth or first fruit! Throne, unshared and single, that disdainest a Brentford competitor! Honour without co-rival! Or hearest thou rather, magnificent theatre in which the spectator comes to see and to be seen? From thy giddy heights I look down upon the common herd, who stand with eyes upturned as if a winged messenger hovered over them; and mouths open, as if they expected manna. I feel, I feel, the true Episcopalian yearnings. Behold in me, my flock, your true overseer! What though I cannot lay hands, because my own are laid, yet I can mutter benedictions. True *otium cum dignitate!* Proud Pisgah eminence! Pinnacle sublime! O Pillory, 'tis thee I sing! Thou younger brother to the gallows, without his rough and Esau palms; that with ineffable contempt surveyest beneath thee the grovelling stocks, which claims presumptuously to be of thy great race. Let that low wood know that thou art far higher born! Let that domicile for groundling rogues and base earth-kissing varlets envy thy preferment, not seldom fated to be the wanton baiting-house, the temporary retreat, of poet and of patriot. Shades of Bastwick and of Prynne hover over thee—Defoe is there, and more greatly daring Shebbeare—from their (little more elevated) stations they look down with recognitions. Ketch, turn me.

I now veer to the north. Open your widest gates, thou proud Exchange of London, that I may look in as proudly! Gresham's wonder, hail! I stand upon a level with all your kings. They, and I, from equal heights, with equal superciliousness, o'er-look the plodding, money-hunting tribe below; who, busied in their sordid speculations, scarce elevate their eyes to notice your ancient, or my recent, grandeur. The second Charles smiles on me from three pedestals?[a] He closed the Exchequer: I cheated the Excise. Equal our darings, equal be our lot.

Are those the quarters? 'tis their fatal chime. That

[a] A statue of Charles II. by the elder Cibber, adorns the front of the Exchange. He stands also on high, in the train of his crowned ancestors, in his proper order, *within* that building. But the merchants of London, in a superfœtation of loyalty, have, within a few years, caused to be erected another effigy of him on the ground in the centre of the interior. We do not hear that a fourth is in contemplation.—*Editor.*

the ever-winged hours would but stand still! but I must descend, descend from this dream of greatness. Stay, stay, a little while, importunate hour hand! A moment or two, and I shall walk on foot with the undistinguished many. The clock speaks one. I return to common life. Ketch, let me out.

THE LAST PEACH

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, New Series, vol. i, p. 593 (April, 1825). First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

I AM the miserablest man living. Give me counsel, dear Editor. I was bred up in the strictest principles of honesty, and have passed my life in punctual adherence to them. Integrity might be said to be ingrained in our family. Yet I live in constant fear of one day coming to the gallows.

Till the latter end of last autumn I never experienced these feelings of self-mistrust which ever since have embittered my existence. From the apprehension of that unfortunate man whose story began to make so great an impression upon the public about that time, I date my horrors. I never can get it out of my head that I shall some time or other commit a forgery, or do some equally vile thing. To make matters worse I am in a banking-house. I sit surrounded with a cluster of bank-notes. These were formerly no more to me than meat to a butcher's dog. They are now as toads and aspics. I feel all day like one situated amidst gins and pit-falls. Sovereigns, which I once took such pleasure in counting out, and scraping up with my little thin tin shovel (at which I was the most expert in the banking-house), now scald my hands. When I go to sign my name I set down that of another person, or write my own in a counterfeit character. I am beset with temptations without motive. I want no more wealth than I possess. A more contented being than myself, as to money matters, exists not. What should I fear?

When a child I was once let loose, by favour of a Nobleman's gardener, into his Lordship's magnificent fruit garden, with free leave to pull the currants and the gooseberries; only I was interdicted from touching the wall fruit. Indeed, at that season (it was the end of Autumn)

there was little left. Only on the South wall (can I forget the hot feel of the brick-work ?) lingered the last one peach. Now peaches are a fruit I always had, and still have, an almost utter aversion to. There is something to my palate singularly harsh and repulsive in the flavour of them. I know not by what demon of contradiction inspired, but I was haunted by an irresistible desire to pluck it. Tear myself as often as I would from the spot, I found myself still recurring to it, till, maddening with desire (desire I cannot call it), with wilfulness rather—without appetite —against appetite, I may call it—in an evil hour I reached out my hand and plucked it. Some few rain drops just then fell ; the sky (from a bright day) became overcast ; and I was a type of our first parents, after the eating of that fatal fruit. I felt myself naked and ashamed ; stripped of my virtue, spiritless. The downy fruit, whose sight rather than savour had tempted me, dropt from my hand, never to be tasted. All the commentators in the world cannot persuade me but that the Hebrew word in the second chapter of Genesis, translated apple, should be rendered peach. Only this way can I reconcile that mysterious story.

Just such a child at thirty am I among the cash and valuables, longing to pluck, without an idea of enjoyment further. I cannot reason myself out of these fears : I dare not laugh at them. I was tenderly and lovingly brought up. What then ? Who that in life's entrance had seen the babe F——, from the lap stretching out his little fond mouth to catch the maternal kiss, could have predicted, or as much as imagined, that life's very different exit ? The sight of my own fingers torments me ; they seem so admirably constructed for——pilfering. Then that jugular vein, which I have in common——; in an emphatic sense may I say with David, I am ' fearfully made '. All my mirth is poisoned by these unhappy suggestions. If, to dissipate reflection, I hum a tune, it changes to the ' Lamentations of a Sinner '. My very dreams are tainted. I awake with a shocking feeling of my hand in some pocket.

Advise with me, dear Editor, on this painful heart-malady. Tell me, do you feel any thing allied to it in yourself ? do you never feel an itching, as it were—a *dactylo-*

mania—or am I alone? You have my honest confession. My next may appear from Bow-street.

SUSPENSURUS.

'ODES AND ADDRESSES TO GREAT PEOPLE'

[Printed in *The New Times*, April 12, 1825. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

THE Odes and Addresses are Thirteen in number. The metre is happily varied from the familiar epistolary verse to the Eton College stanza, and loftier parodies of Gray, &c. Among the Great People addressed are—Graham the Aeronaut, Mr. McAdam, Mrs. Fry, Martin of Galway, R. W. Elliston, Esq., &c. &c. from which the reader may gather that the Addresses are not mere unqualified or fulsome dedications. They have, in fact, a fund of fun. They remind us of Peter Pindar, and sometimes of Colman; they have almost as much humour, and they have rather more wit. A too great aim at brilliancy is their excess. We do not think that in any work there can be too much brilliancy *of the same kind*. We are not of opinion with those critics who condemn Cowley for excess of wit. We could have borne with a double portion of it, and have never cried 'Hold'. What we allude to is a mixture of *incompatible* kinds; the perpetual recurrence of *puns* in these little effusions of humour; puns uncalled for, and perfectly gratuitous, a sort of make-weight; puns, which, if *missed*, leave the sense and the drollery full and perfect without them. You may read any one of the addresses, and not catch a quibble in it, and it shall be just as good, nay better; for the addition of said quibble only serves to puzzle with an unnecessary double meaning. A pun is good when it can rely on its single self; but, called in as an accessory, it weakens—unless it *makes* the humour, it *enfeebles* it. All this critical prosing is not quite a fair introduction to the pleasant specimen we subjoin, from the pleasantest *morceau* in the volume, which we throw upon the taste of our pantomime-going readers, with a hearty confidence in their sympathies. The subject is no less a one than their and our Joe—the immortal Grimaldi.

Joseph! they say thou'st left the stage,
To toddle down the hill of life,
And taste the flannell'd ease of age,
Apart from pantomimic strife—

. . . . . .

Ah, where is now thy rolling head!
Thy winking, reeling, *drunken* eyes,
(As old Catullus would have said,)
Thy oven-mouth, that swallow'd pies—
Enormous hunger—monstrous drowth!—
Thy pockets greedy as thy mouth!

Ah, where thy ears, so often cuff'd!—
Thy funny, flapping, filching hands!—
Thy partridge body, always stuff'd
With waifs, and strays, and contrabands!—
Thy *foot*—like Berkeley's *Foote*—for why?
'Twas often made to *wipe an eye!* ×

Ah, where thy legs—that witty pair!
For 'great wits jump'—and so did they!
Lord! how they leap'd in lamp-light air!
Caper'd—and bounc'd—and strode away!—
That years should tame the legs—alack!
I've seen spring thro' an Almanack!

But bounds will have their bound ×—the shocks
Of Time will cramp the nimblest toes;
And those that frisk'd in silken clocks
May look to limp in fleecy hose—

. . . . . .

And gout, that owns no odds between
The toe of Czar and toe of Clown,
Will visit—but I did not mean
To moralize, though I am grown
Thus sad.—Thy going seem'd to beat
A muffled drum for Fun's retreat!

. . . . . .

Oh, how will thy departure cloud
The lamp-light of the little breast!
The Christmas child will grieve aloud
To miss his broadest friend and best,—

. . . . . .

For who like thee could ever stride!
Some dozen paces to the mile!—
The motley, medley *coach* provide—
Or, like Joe Frankenstein, compile
The *vegetable man* complete!—
A proper *Covent Garden* feat!

Or who like thee could ever drink,
Or eat,—swill, swallow—bolt—and choke!
Nod, weep, and hiccup—sneeze and wink?—
Thy very yawn was quite a joke!
Tho' Joseph, Junior, acts not ill,
'There's no Fool like the old Fool' still!

All that is descriptive here is excellent. It seems to us next in merit to some of Cibber's dramatic comic portraitures. Joe, the absolute Joe, lives again in every line. We have just set our mark X against two puns to exemplify our foregoing remarks. The first of them is a positive stop to the current of our joyous feelings. What possible analogy, or contrast even, can there be between a comic gesture of Grimaldi, and the serious misfortunes of the lady, except in verbal sound purely? The second is good, because the humour lies in the pun, and moreover has reference to Milton's

——at one bound
High over leaps all bounds.

A pun is a humble companion to wit, but disdains to be a train-bearer merely. But these poems are rich in fancies, which, in truth, needed not such aid.

THE PROGRESS OF CANT

[This criticism of Hood's *Progress of Cant* appeared in *The New Monthly Magazine*, February, 1826 (vol. xvi, p. 232). Mr. E. V. Lucas identifies and collects it as Lamb's: *Works of C. and M. L.*, vol. vii, 1905, p. 983.]

A WICKED wag has produced a caricature under this title, in which he marshalleth all the projected improvements of the age, and maketh them take their fantastic progress before the eyes of the scorner. It is a spirited etching, almost as abundant in meaning as in figures, and hath a reprobate eye to a corner—an Hogarthian vivification of post and placard. Priests, anti-priests, architects, politicians, reformers, flaming loyalty-men, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, all go on 'progressing', as the Americans say. Life goes on, at any rate; and there is so much merriment on all sides, that for our parts, inclined to improvements as we are, we should be willing enough to

join in the laugh throughout, if the world were as merry as the artist. The houses are as much to the purpose as the pedestrians. There is the office of the Peruvian Mining Company, in dismal, dilapidated condition; a barber's shop, with 'Nobody to be shaved during divine service', the *h* worn out; two boarding-schools for young ladies and gentlemen, very neighbourly; and the public-house, called the Angel and Punch-Bowl, by T. Moore. Among the crowd is a jolly, but vehement, reverend person holding a flag, inscribed, 'The Church in Anger', the *D* for danger being hidden by another flag, inscribed, 'Converted Jews'. Then there is the Caledonian Chap (*el* being obstructed in the same way), who holds a pennon, crying out, 'No Theatre!' Purity of Election, with a bludgeon, very drunk; and, above all, a petty fellow called the Great Unknown, with his hat over his eyes, and a constable's staff peeping out of his pocket. Some of the faces and figures are very clever, particularly the Barber; the Saving-banks man; the Jew Boy picking the pocket; the Charity Boy and the Beadle. The Beadle is rich from head to foot. Nathless, we like not to see Mrs. Fry so roasted: we are at a loss to know why the Blacks deserve to be made Black Devils; and are not aware that the proposal of an University in London has occasioned, or is likely to occasion, any sort of cant. However, there is no harm done where a cause can afford a joke; and where it cannot, the more it is joked at, the better.

THE RELIGION OF ACTORS

[Printed in *The New Monthly Magazine*, April, 1826 (vol. xvi, p. 405). First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

THE world has hitherto so little troubled its head with the points of doctrine held by a community, which contributes in other ways so largely to its amusements, that, before the late mischance of a celebrated tragic actor, it scarce condescended to look into the practice of any individual player, much less to inquire into the hidden and abscondite springs of his actions. Indeed it is with some violence to the imagination that we conceive of an

actor as belonging to the relations of private life, so closely do we identify these persons in our mind with the characters which they assume upon the stage. How oddly does it sound, when we are told that the late Miss Pope, for instance—that is to say, in our notion of her, *Mrs. Candour*—was a good daughter, an affectionate sister, and exemplary in all the parts of domestic life! With still greater difficulty can we carry our notions to church, and conceive of Liston, kneeling upon a hassock; or Munden uttering a pious ejaculation, 'making mouths at the invisible event.' But the times are fast improving; and, if the process of sanctity begun under the happy auspices of the present licenser go on to its completion, it will be as necessary for a comedian to give an account of his faith, as of his conduct. Fawcett must study the five points; and Dicky Suett, if he were alive, would have to rub up his catechism. Already the effects of it begin to appear. A celebrated performer has thought fit to oblige the world with a confession of his faith; or, Br——'s RELIGIO DRAMATICI. This gentleman, in his laudable attempt to shift from his person the obloquy of Judaism, with the forwardness of a new convert, in trying to prove too much, has, in the opinion of many, proved too little. A simple declaration of his Christianity was sufficient; but, strange to say, his apology has not a word about it. We are left to gather it from some expressions which imply that he is a Protestant; but we do not wish to inquire into the niceties of his orthodoxy. To his friends of the *old persuasion* the distinction was impertinent; for what cares Rabbi Ben Kimchi for the differences which have split our novelty? To the great body of Christians that hold the Pope's supremacy—that is to say, to the major part of the Christian world—his religion will appear as much to seek as ever. But perhaps he conceived that all Christians are Protestants, as children and the common people call all that are not animals, Christians. The mistake was not very considerable in so young a proselyte; or he might think the general (as logicians speak) involved in the particular. All Protestants are Christians; but I am a Protestant; *ergo*, &c. as if a marmoset, contending to be a man, overleaping that term as too generic and vulgar, should at once roundly

proclaim himself to be a gentleman. The argument would be, as we say, *ex abundanti*. From whichever cause this *excessus in terminis* proceeded, we can do no less than congratulate the general state of Christendom upon the accession of so extraordinary a convert. Who was the happy instrument of the conversion, we are yet to learn: it comes nearest to the attempt of the late pious Doctor Watts to christianize the Psalms of the Old Testament. Something of the old Hebrew raciness is lost in the transfusion; but much of its asperity is softened and pared down in the adaptation. The appearance of so singular a treatise at this conjuncture has set us upon an inquiry into the present state of religion upon the stage generally. By the favour of the churchwardens of Saint Martin's in the Fields, and Saint Paul's, Covent-Garden, who have very readily, and with great kindness, assisted our pursuit, we are enabled to lay before the public the following particulars.—Strictly speaking, neither of the two great bodies is collectively a religious institution. We had expected to have found a chaplain among them, as at Saint Stephen's, and other court establishments; and were the more surprised at the omission, as the last Mr. Bengough, at the one house, and Mr. Powell at the other, from a gravity of speech and demeanour, and the habit of wearing black at their first appearances in the beginning of *fifth*, or the conclusion of *fourth acts*, so eminently pointed out their qualifications for such office. These corporations then being not properly congregational, we must seek the solution of our question in the tastes, attainments, accidental breeding, and education of the individual members of them. As we were prepared to expect, a majority at both houses adhere to the religion of the church established, only that at one of them a pretty strong leaven of Catholicism is suspected: which, considering the notorious education of the manager at a foreign seminary, is not so much to be wondered at. Some have gone so far as to report that Mr. T——y, in particular, belongs to an order lately restored on the Continent. We can contradict this: that gentleman is a member of the Kirk of Scotland; and his name is to be found, much to his honour, in the list of Seceders from the congregation of Mr. Fletcher. While

the generality, as we have said, are content to jog on in the safe trammels of national orthodoxy, symptoms of a sectarian spirit have broken out in quarters where we should least have looked for it. Some of the ladies at both houses are deep in controverted points. Miss F——e, we are credibly informed, is a *sub*, and Madame V—— a *supra*-lapsarian.

Mr. Pope is the last of the exploded sect of the Ranters. Mr. Sinclair has joined the Shakers. Mr. Grimaldi, Senior, after being long a Jumper, has lately fallen into some whimsical theories respecting the Fall of Man; which he understands, not of an allegorical, but a *real tumble*, by which the whole body of humanity became, as it were, lame to the performance of good works. Pride he will have to be—nothing but a stiff-neck; irresolution—the nerves shaken; an inclination to sinister paths—crookedness of the joints; spiritual deadness—a paralysis; want of charity—a contraction in the fingers; despising of government—a broken head; the plaister—a sermon; the lint to bind it up—the text; the probers—the preachers; a pair of crutches—the old and new law; a bandage—religious obligation: a fanciful mode of illustration derived from the accidents and habits of his past calling *spiritualised*, rather than from any accurate acquaintance with the Hebrew text, in which report speaks him but a raw scholar. —Mr. Elliston, from all that we can learn, has his religion yet to choose; though some think him a Muggletonian.

A POPULAR FALLACY

[Printed in *The New Monthly Magazine*, June, 1826 (vol. xvi, p. 623). First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

That a deformed person is a lord.—After a careful perusal of the most approved works that treat of nobility, and of its origin, in these realms in particular, we are left very much in the dark as to the original patent, in which this branch of it is recognised. Neither Camden in his 'Etymologie and Original of Barons', nor Dugdale in his 'Baronage of England', nor Selden (a more exact and laborious enquirer than either) in his 'Titles of Honour', afford

a glimpse of satisfaction upon the subject. There is an heraldic term, indeed, which seems to imply gentility, and the right to coat armour, (but nothing further) in persons thus qualified. But the *sinister bend* is more probably interpreted, by the best writers on this science, of some irregularity of birth, than of bodily conformation. Nobility is either hereditary, or by creation, commonly called patent. Of the former kind, the title in question cannot be, seeing that the notion of it is limited to a personal distinction, which does not necessarily follow in the blood. Honours of this nature, as Mr. Anstey very well observes, descend moreover in a *right line*. It must be by patent then, if any thing. But who can show it? How comes it to be dormant? Under what king's reign is it pretended? Among the grounds of nobility cited by the learned Mr. Ashmole, after 'Services in the Field or in the Council Chamber', he judiciously sets down 'Honours conferred by the sovereign out of mere benevolence, or as favouring one subject rather than another, for some likeness or conformity observed (or but supposed) in him to the royal nature'; and instances the graces showered upon Charles Brandon, who 'in his goodly person being thought not a little to favour the port and bearing of the king's own majesty, was by that sovereign, King Henry the Eighth, for some or one of these respects, highly promoted and preferred'. Here, if any where, we thought we had discovered a clue to our researches. But after a painful investigation of the rolls and records under the reign of Richard the Third, or Richard Crouchback, as he is more usually designated in the chronicles, from a traditionary stoop, or gibbosity in that part,—we do not find that that monarch conferred any such lordships, as are here pretended, upon any subject, or subjects, on a simple plea of 'conformity' in that respect to the 'royal nature'. The posture of affairs in those tumultuous times, preceding the battle of Bosworth, possibly left him at no leisure to attend to such niceties. Further than his reign we have not extended our enquiries; the kings of England who preceded, or followed him, being generally described by historians to have been of straight and clean limbs, the 'natural derivative (says Daniel[a]) of

[a] History of England, 'Temporibus Edwardi Primi et sequentibus.'

high blood, if not its primitive recommendation to such ennoblement, as denoting strength and martial prowess—the qualities set most by in that fighting age'. Another motive, which inclines us to scruple the validity of this claim, is the remarkable fact, that none of the persons, in whom the right is supposed to be vested, do ever insist upon it themselves. There is no instance of any of them 'sueing his patent', as the law-books call it; much less of his having actually stepped up into his proper seat, as, so qualified, we might expect that some of them would have had the spirit to do, in the House of Lords. On the contrary, it seems to be a distinction thrust upon them. 'Their title of Lord (says one of their own body, speaking of the common people) I never much valued, and now I entirely despise: and yet they will force it upon me as an honour which they have a right to bestow, and which I have none to refuse.'[a] Upon a dispassionate review of the subject, we are disposed to believe that there is no right to the peerage incident to mere bodily configuration; that the title in dispute is merely honorary, and depending upon the breath of the common people; which in these realms is so far from the power of conferring nobility, that the ablest constitutionalists have agreed in nothing more unanimously, than in the maxim that the King is the sole fountain of honour.

REMINISCENCES OF JUKE JUDKINS, ESQ., OF BIRMINGHAM

[Printed in *The New Monthly Magazine*, June, 1826 (vol. xvi, p. 537); signed Elia. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

I am the only son of a considerable brazier in Birmingham, who dying in 1803, left me successor to the business, with no other incumbrance than a sort of rent-charge, which I am enjoined to pay out of it, ninety-three pounds sterling *per annum* to his widow, my mother; and which the improving state of the concern, I bless God, has hitherto enabled me to discharge with punctuality. (I say, I am

[a] Hay on Deformity.

enjoined to pay the said sum, but not strictly obligated; that is to say, as the will is worded, I believe the law would relieve me from the payment of it; but the wishes of a dying parent should in some sort have the effect of law.) So that though the annual profits of my business, on an average of the last three or four years, would appear to an indifferent observer, who should inspect my shop-books, to amount to the sum of one thousand three hundred and three pounds, odd shillings, the real proceeds in that time have fallen short of that sum to the amount of the aforesaid payment of ninety-three pounds sterling annually.

I was always my father's favourite. He took a delight to the very last in recounting the little sagacious tricks, and innocent artifices, of my childhood. One manifestation thereof I never heard him repeat without tears of joy trickling down his cheeks. It seems that when I quitted the parental roof (August 27th, 1788,) being then six years and not quite a month old, to proceed to the Free School at Warwick, where my father was a sort of trustee, my mother—as mothers are usually provident on these occasions—had stuffed the pockets of the coach, which was to convey me and six more children of my own growth, that were going to be entered along with me at the same seminary, with a prodigious quantity of gingerbread, which I remember my father said was more than was needed; and so indeed it was, for if I had been to eat it all myself, it would have got stale and mouldy before it had been half spent. The consideration whereof set me upon my contrivances how I might secure to myself as much of the gingerbread as would keep good for the next two or three days, and yet none of the rest in a manner be wasted. I had a little pair of pocket compasses which I usually carried about with me for the purpose of making draughts and measurements, at which I was always very ingenious, of the various engines and mechanical inventions, in which such a town as Birmingham abounded. By the means of these, and a small penknife, which my father had given me, I cut out the one half of the cake, calculating that the remainder would reasonably serve my turn, and subdividing it into many little slices, which were curious to see for the neatness and niceness of their

proportion, I sold it out in so many pennyworths to my young companions, as served us all the way to Warwick, which is a distance of some twenty miles from this town; and very merry, I assure you, we made ourselves with it, feasting all the way. By this honest stratagem I put double the prime cost of the gingerbread into my purse, and secured as much as I thought would keep good and moist for my next two or three days' eating. When I told this to my parents on their first visit to me at Warwick, my father (good man) patted me on the cheek, and stroked my head, and seemed as if he could never make enough of me; but my mother unaccountably burst into tears, and said 'it was a very niggardly action', or some such expression, and that 'she would rather it would please God to take me',—meaning, God help me, that I should die—'than that she should live to see me grow up a *mean man*'—which shows the difference of parent from parent, and how some mothers are more harsh and intolerant to their children than some fathers; when we might expect quite the contrary. My father, however, loaded me with presents from that time, which made me the envy of my schoolfellows. As I felt this growing disposition in them, I naturally sought to avert it by all the means in my power; and from that time I used to eat my little packages of fruit, and other nice things, in a corner so privately, that I was never found out. Once, I remember, I had a huge apple sent me, of that sort which they call *cats' heads*. I concealed this all day under my pillow; and at night, but not before I had ascertained that my bedfellow was sound asleep, which I did by pinching him rather smartly two or three times, which he seemed to perceive no more than a dead person, though once or twice he made a motion as if he would turn, which frightened me—I say, when I had made all sure, I fell to work upon my apple; and though it was as big as an ordinary man's two fists, I made shift to get through it before it was time to get up; and a more delicious feast I never made,—thinking all night what a good parent I had (I mean my father) to send me so many nice things, when the poor lad that lay by me had no parent or friend in the world to send him any thing nice; and thinking of his desolate condition, I munched and

munched as silently as I could, that I might not set him a longing if he overheard me: and yet for all this considerateness, and attention to other people's feelings, I was never much a favourite with my schoolfellows, which I have often wondered at, seeing that I never defrauded any one of them of the value of a halfpenny, or told stories of them to their master, as some little lying boys would do, but was ready to do any of them all the services in my power, that were consistent with my own well doing. I think nobody can be expected to go further than that. But I am detaining my reader too long in the recording of my juvenile days. It is time that I should go forward to a season when it became natural that I should have some thoughts of marrying, and, as they say, settling in the world. Nevertheless my reflections on what I may call the boyish period of my life may have their use to some readers. It is pleasant to trace the man in the boy; to observe shoots of generosity in those young years, and to watch the progress of liberal sentiments, and what I may call a genteel way of thinking, which is discernible in some children at a very early age, and usually lays the foundation of all that is praiseworthy in the manly character afterwards.

With the warmest inclinations towards that way of life, and a serious conviction of its superior advantages over a single one, it has been the strange infelicity of my lot, never to have entered into the respectable estate of matrimony. Yet I was once very near it. I courted a young woman in my twenty-seventh year—for so early I began to feel symptoms of the tender passion! She was well to do in the world, as they call it; but yet not such a fortune as, all things considered, perhaps I might have pretended to. It was not my own choice altogether; but my mother very strongly pressed me to it. She was always putting it to me, that 'I had comings in sufficient, that I need not stand upon a portion'. Though the young woman, to do her justice, had considerable expectations, which yet did not quite come up to my mark, as I told you before. She had this saying always in her mouth, that 'I had money enough, that it was time I enlarged my housekeeping, and to show a spirit befitting my circumstances'. In short, what with her importunities, and my

own desires *in part* co-operating—for, as I said, I was not yet quite twenty-seven—a time when the youthful feelings may be pardoned, if they show a little impetuosity —I resolved, I say, upon all these considerations, to set about the business of courting in right earnest. I was a young man then ; and having a spice of romance in my character (as the reader has doubtless observed long ago), such as that sex is apt to be taken with, I had reason in no long time to think my addresses were any thing but disagreeable.

Certainly the happiest part of a young man's life is the time when he is going a courting. All the generous impulses are then awake, and he feels a double existence in participating his hopes and wishes with another being. Return yet again for a brief moment, ye visionary views—transient enchantments ! ye moonlight rambles with Cleora in the Silent Walk at Vauxhall—(N.B. about a mile from Birmingham, and resembling the gardens of that name near London, only that the price of admission is lower)—when the nightingale has suspended her notes in June to listen to our loving discourses, while the moon was overhead (for we generally used to take our tea at Cleora's mother's before we set out, not so much to save expenses, as to avoid the publicity of a repast in the gardens, coming in much about the time of half-price, as they call it)—ye soft intercommunions of soul, when exchanging mutual vows we prattled of coming felicities ! The loving disputes we have had under those trees, when this house (planning our future settlement) was rejected, because though cheap it was dull ; and the other house was given up, because though agreeably situated it was too high-rented—one was too much in the heart of the town, another was too far from business. These minutiæ will seem impertinent to the aged and prudent. I write them only to the young. Young lovers, and passionate as being young (such were Cleora and I then) alone can understand me. After some weeks wasted, as I may now call it, in this sort of amorous colloquy, we at length fixed upon the house in the High-street, No. 203, just vacated by the death of Mr. Hutton of this town, for our future residence. I had till that time lived in lodgings (only renting a shop for business) to be near to

my mother; near I say, not in the same house with her, for that would have been to introduce confusion into our housekeepings, which it was desirable to keep separate. O, the loving wrangles, the endearing differences, I had with Cleora, before we could quite make up our minds to the house that was to receive us—I pretending for argument sake that the rent was too high, and she insisting that the taxes were moderate in proportion; and love at last reconciling us in the same choice. I think at that time, moderately speaking, she might have had any thing out of me for asking. I do not, nor shall ever regret that my character at that time was marked with a tinge of prodigality. Age comes fast enough upon us, and in its good time will prune away all that is inconvenient in these excesses. Perhaps it is right that it should do so. Matters, as I said, were ripening to a conclusion between us, only the house was yet not absolutely taken—some necessary arrangements, which the ardour of my youthful impetuosity could hardly brook at that time (love and youth will be precipitate)—some preliminary arrangements, I say, with the landlord respecting fixtures—very necessary things to be considered in a young man about to settle in the world, though not very accordant with the impatient state of my then passions—some obstacles about the valuation of the fixtures, had hitherto precluded (and I shall always think providentially) my final closes with his offer, when one of those accidents, which, unimportant in themselves, often arise to give a turn to the most serious intentions of our life, intervened, and put an end at once to my projects of wiving and of housekeeping. I was never much given to theatrical entertainments; that is, at no time of my life was I ever what they call a regular play-goer; but on some occasion of a benefit-night, which was expected to be very productive, and indeed turned out so, Cleora expressing a desire to be present, I could do no less than offer, as I did very willingly, to 'squire her and her mother to the pit. At that time it was not customary in our town for tradesfolk, except some of the very topping ones, to sit as they now do in the boxes. At the time appointed I waited upon the ladies, who had brought with them a young man, a distant relation, whom it seems they had invited to be of

the party. This a little disconcerted me, as I had about me barely silver enough to pay for our three selves at the door, and did not at first know that their relation had proposed paying for himself. However, to do the young man justice, he not only paid for himself, but for the old lady besides, leaving me only to pay for two, as it were. In our passage to the theatre, the notice of Cleora was attracted to some orange wenches that stood about the doors vending their commodities. She was leaning on my arm, and I could feel her every now and then giving me a nudge, as it is called, which I afterwards discovered were hints that I should buy some oranges. It seems it is a custom at Birmingham, and perhaps in other places, when a gentleman treats ladies to the play,—especially when a full night is expected, and that the house will be inconveniently warm, to provide them with this kind of fruit, oranges being esteemed for their cooling property. But how could I guess at that, never having treated ladies to a play before, and being, as I said, quite a novice at these kind of entertainments? At last she spoke plain out, and begged that I would buy some of 'those oranges', pointing to a particular barrow. But when I came to examine the fruit, I did not think that the quality of it was answerable to the price. In this way I handled several baskets of them, but something in them all displeased me. Some had thin rinds, and some were plainly over ripe, which is as great a fault as not being ripe enough, and I could not (what they call) make a bargain. While I stood haggling with the women, secretly determining to put off my purchase till I should get within the theatre, where I expected we should have better choice, the young man, the cousin, who it seems had left us without my missing him, came running to us with his pockets stuffed out with oranges, inside and out, as they say. It seems, not liking the look of the barrow-fruit, any more than myself, he had slipped away to an eminent fruiterer's about three doors distant, which I never had the sense to think of, and had laid out a matter of two shillings in some of the best St. Michael's, I think, I ever tasted. What a little hinge, as I said before, the most important affairs in life may turn upon! The mere inadvertence to the fact that there was

an eminent fruiterer's within three doors of us, though we had just passed it without the thought once occurring to me, which he had taken advantage of, lost me the affections of my Cleora. From that time she visibly cooled toward me, and her partiality was as visibly transferred to this cousin. I was long unable to account for this change in her behaviour, when one day accidentally discoursing of oranges to my mother alone, she let drop a sort of reproach to me, as if I had offended Cleora by my *nearness*, as she called it, that evening. Even now, when Cleora has been wedded some years to that same officious relation, as I may call him, I can hardly be persuaded that such a trifle could have been the motive to her inconstancy; for could she suppose that I would sacrifice my dearest hopes in her to the paltry sum of two shillings, when I was going to treat her to the play, and her mother too (an expense of more than four times that amount), if the young man had not interfered to pay for the latter, as I mentioned? But the caprices of the sex are past finding out; and I begin to think my mother was in the right; for doubtless women know women better than we can pretend to know them. ELIA.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HONE'S *EVERY-DAY BOOK*

(1825–1826)

I.—REMARKABLE CORRESPONDENT

[Printed in Wm. Hone's *The Every-Day Book*, vol. i, May 1, 1825. First collected in *The Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb*, ed. Percy Fitzgerald (Moxon), 1875.]

To the Editor of the Every-Day Book

SIR,—I am the youngest of Three hundred and sixty-six brethren—there are no fewer of us—who have the honour, in the words of the good old Song, to call the Sun our Dad. You have done the rest of our family the favour of bestowing an especial compliment upon each member of it individually—I mean, as far as you have gone; for it will take you some time before you can make your bow all round—and I have no reason to think that it is

your intention to neglect any of us but poor Me. Some you have hung round with flowers ; others you have made fine with martyrs' palms and saintly garlands. The most insignificant of us you have sent away pleased with some fitting apologue, or pertinent story. What have I done, that you dismiss me without mark or attribute ? What though I make my public appearance seldomer than the rest of my brethren ? I thought that angels' visits had been accounted the more precious for their very rarity. Reserve was always looked upon as dignified. I am seen but once, for four times that my brethren obtrude themselves ; making their presence cheap and contemptible, in comparison with the state which I keep.

Am I not a Day (when I do come) to all purposes as much as any of them. Decompose me, anatomise me ; you will find that I am constituted like the rest. Divide me into twenty-four, and you shall find that I cut up into as many goodly hours (or main limbs) as the rest. I too have my arteries and pulses, which are the minutes and the seconds.

It is hard to be dis-familied thus, like Cinderella in her rags and ashes, while her sisters flaunted it about in cherry-coloured ribbons and favors. My brethren forsooth are to be dubbed ; one, *Saint* Day ; another, *Pope* Day ; a third, *Bishop* Day ; the least of them is *Squire* Day, or *Mr.* Day, while I am—plain Day. Our house, Sir, is a very ancient one, and the least of us is too proud to put up with an indignity. What though I am but a younger brother in some sense—for the youngest of my brethren is by some thousand years my senior—yet I bid fair to inherit as long as any of them, while I have the Calendar to show ; which, you must understand, is our Title Deeds.

Not content with slurring me over with a bare and naked acknowledgement of my occasional visitation in prose, you have done your best to deprive me of my verse-honours. In column 310 of your Book, you quote an antique scroll, leaving out the last couplet, as if on purpose to affront me. ' Thirty days hath September '—so you transcribe very faithfully for four lines, and most invidiously suppress the exceptive clause :—

Except in Leap Year, that's the time
When February's days hath twenty and—

I need not set down the rhyme which should follow; I dare say you know it very well, though you were pleased to leave it out. These indignities demand reparation. While you have time, it will be well for you to make the *amende honorable*. Ransack your stores, learned Sir, I pray of you, for some attribute, biographical, anecdotical, or floral, to invest me with. Did nobody die, or nobody flourish, was nobody born—upon any of my periodical visits to this globe? does the world stand still as often as I vouchsafe to appear? Am I a blank in the Almanac? alms for oblivion? If you do not find a flower at least to grace me with (a Forget Me Not would cheer me in my present obscurity), I shall prove the worst Day to you you ever saw in your life; and your Work, instead of the Title it now vaunts, must be content (every fourth year at least) to go by the lame appellation of

The Every-Day—but—one—Book.

Yours, as you treat me,

TWENTY NINTH OF FEBRUARY.

II.—DOG DAYS

'Now Sirius rages'

[Printed in Wm. Hone's *The Every-Day Book*, vol. i, July 14, 1825. First identified by Mr. J. A. Rutter, and collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, 1903 (*Works of C. and M. Lamb*, vol. i, Appendix, p. 383.]

To the Editor of the Every-Day Book

SIR,—I am one of those unfortunate creatures, who, at this season of the year, are exposed to the effects of an illiberal prejudice. Warrants are issued out in form, and whole scores of us are taken up and executed annually, under an obsolete statute, on what is called suspicion of lunacy. It is very hard that a sober sensible dog, cannot go quietly through a village about his business, without having his motions watched, or some impertinent fellow observing that there is an 'odd look about his eyes.' My pulse, for instance, at this present writing, is as temperate as yours, Mr. Editor, and my head as little rambling, but

I hardly dare to show my face out of doors for fear of these scrutinizers. If I look up in a stranger's face, he thinks I am going to bite him. If I go with my eyes fixed upon the ground, they say I have got the mopes, which is but a short stage from the disorder. If I wag my tail, I am too lively; if I do not wag it, I am sulky—either of which appearances passes alike for a prognostic. If I pass a dirty puddle without drinking, sentence is infallibly pronounced upon me. I am perfectly swilled with the quantity of ditch-water I am forced to swallow in a day, to clear me from imputations—a worse cruelty than the water ordeal of your old Saxon ancestors. If I snap at a bone, I am furious; if I refuse it, I have got the sullens, and that is a bad symptom. I dare not bark outright, for fear of being adjudged to rave. It was but yesterday, that I indulged in a little innocent *yelp* only, on occasion of a cart-wheel going over my leg, and the populace was up in arms, as if I had betrayed some marks of flightiness in my conversation.

Really our case is one which calls for the interference of the chancellor. He should see, as in cases of other lunatics, that commissions are only issued out against proper objects; and not a whole race be proscribed, because some dreaming Chaldean, two thousand years ago, fancied a canine resemblance in some star or other, that was supposed to predominate over addle brains, with as little justice as Mercury was held to be influential over rogues and swindlers; no compliment I am sure to either star or planet. Pray attend to my complaint, Mr. Editor, and speak a good word for us this hot weather.

Your faithful, though sad dog,

POMPEY.

III.—CAPTAIN STARKEY

[Printed in Wm. Hone's *The Every-Day Book*, vol. i, July 21, 1825. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

To the Editor of the Every-Day Book

DEAR SIR,

I read your account of this unfortunate Being, and his forlorn piece of self-history, with that smile of half-

interest which the Annals of Insignificance excite, till I came to where he says 'I was bound apprentice to Mr. William Bird, an eminent writer and Teacher of languages and Mathematics', &c.—when I started as one does on the recognition of an old acquaintance in a supposed stranger. This then was that Starkey of whom I have heard my Sister relate so many pleasant anecdotes; and whom, never having seen, I yet seem almost to remember. For nearly fifty years she had lost all sight of him—and behold the gentle Usher of her youth, grown into an aged Beggar, dubbed with an opprobrious title, to which he had no pretensions; an object, and a May game! To what base purposes may we not return! What may not have been the meek creature's sufferings—what his wanderings—before he finally settled down in the comparative comfort of an old Hospitaller of the Almonry of Newcastle? And is poor Starkey dead?——

I was a scholar of that 'eminent writer' that he speaks of; but Starkey had quitted the school about a year before I came to it. Still the odour of his merits had left a fragrancy upon the recollection of the elder pupils. The school-room stands where it did, looking into a discoloured dingy garden in the passage leading from Fetter Lane into Bartlett's Buildings. It is still a School, though the main prop, alas! has fallen so ingloriously; and bears a Latin inscription over the entrance in the Lane, which was unknown in our humbler times. Heaven knows what 'languages' were taught in it then; I am sure that neither my Sister nor myself brought any out of it, but a little of our native English. By 'mathematics', reader, must be understood 'cyphering'. It was in fact a humble day-school, at which reading and writing were taught to us boys in the morning, and the same slender erudition was communicated to the girls, our sisters, &c. in the evening. Now Starkey presided, under Bird, over both establishments. In my time, Mr. Cook, now or lately a respectable Singer and Performer at Drury-lane Theatre, and Nephew to Mr. Bird, had succeeded to him. I well remember Bird. He was a squat, corpulent, middle-sized man, with something of the gentleman about him, and that peculiar mild tone—especially while he was inflicting

punishment—which is so much more terrible to children, than the angriest looks and gestures. Whippings were not frequent; but when they took place, the correction was performed in a private room adjoining, whence we could only hear the plaints, but saw nothing. This heightened the decorum and the solemnity. But the ordinary public chastisement was the bastinado, a stroke or two on the palm with that almost obsolete weapon now —the ferule. A ferule was a sort of flat ruler, widened at the inflicting end into a shape resembling a pear,—but nothing like so sweet—with a delectable hole in the middle, to raise blisters, like a cupping-glass. I have an intense recollection of that disused instrument of torture—and the malignancy, in proportion to the apparent mildness, with which its strokes were applied. The idea of a rod is accompanied with something ludicrous; but by no process can I look back upon this blister-raiser with any thing but unmingled horror.—To make him look more formidable—if a pedagogue had need of these heightenings —Bird wore one of those flowered Indian gowns, formerly in use with schoolmasters; the strange figures upon which we used to interpret into hieroglyphics of pain and suffering. But boyish fears apart—Bird I believe was in the main a humane and judicious master.

O, how I remember our legs wedged in to those uncomfortable sloping desks, where we sat elbowing each other—and the injunctions to attain a free hand, unattainable in that position; the first copy I wrote after, with its moral lesson 'Art improves Nature'; the still earlier pothooks and the hangers, some traces of which I fear may yet be apparent in this manuscript; the truant looks side-long to the garden, which seemed a mockery of our imprisonment; the prize for best spelling, which had almost turned my head, and which to this day I cannot reflect upon without a vanity, which I ought to be ashamed of—our little leaden inkstands, not separately subsisting, but sunk into the desks; the bright, punctually-washed morning fingers, darkening gradually with another and another ink-spot: what a world of little associated circumstances, pains, and pleasures, mingling their quotas of pleasure, arise at the reading of those few simple words—

'Mr. William Bird, an eminent Writer and Teacher of languages and mathematics in Fetter Lane, Holborn'!

Poor Starkey, when young, had that peculiar stamp of old-fashionedness in his face, which makes it impossible for a beholder to predicate any particular age in the object. You can scarce make a guess between seventeen and seven and thirty. This antique cast always seems to promise ill-luck and penury. Yet it seems, he was not always the abject thing he came to. My Sister, who well remembers him, can hardly forgive Mr. Thomas Ranson for making an etching so unlike her idea of him, when he was a youthful teacher at Mr. Bird's school. Old age and poverty—a life-long poverty she thinks, could at no time have so effaced the marks of native gentility, which were once so visible in a face, otherwise strikingly ugly, thin, and care-worn. From her recollections of him, she thinks that he would have wanted bread, before he would have begged or borrowed a halfpenny. If any of the girls (she says) who were my school-fellows should be reading, through their aged spectacles, tidings from the dead of their youthful friend Starkey, they will feel a pang, as I do, at ever having teased his gentle spirit. They were big girls, it seems, too old to attend his instructions with the silence necessary; and however old age, and a long state of beggary, seem to have reduced his writing faculties to a state of imbecility, in those days, his language occasionally rose to the bold and figurative, for when he was in despair to stop their chattering, his ordinary phrase was, 'Ladies, if you will not hold your peace, not all the powers in heaven can make you.' Once he was missing for a day or two; he had run away. A little old unhappy-looking man brought him back—it was his father—and he did no business in the school that day, but sate moping in a corner, with his hands before his face; and the girls, his tormentors, in pity for his case, for the rest of that day forbore to annoy him. I had been there but a few months (adds she) when Starkey, who was the chief instructor of us girls, communicated to us as a profound secret, that the tragedy of 'Cato' was shortly to be acted by the elder boys, and that we were to be invited to the representation. That Starkey lent a helping hand in fashioning the actors, she

remembers; and but for his unfortunate person, he might have had some distinguished part in the scene to enact; as it was, he had the arduous task of prompter assigned to him, and his feeble voice was heard clear and distinct, repeating the text during the whole performance. She describes her recollection of the cast of characters even now with a relish. Martia, by the handsome Edgar Hickman, who afterwards went to Africa, and of whom she never afterwards heard tidings,—Lucia, by Master Walker, whose sister was her particular friend; Cato, by John Hunter, a masterly declaimer, but a plain boy, and shorter by the head than his two sons in the scene, &c. In conclusion, Starkey appears to have been one of those mild spirits, which, not originally deficient in understanding, are crushed by penury into dejection and feebleness. He might have proved a useful adjunct, if not an ornament to Society, if Fortune had taken him into a very little fostering, but wanting that, he became a Captain—a by-word—and lived, and died, a broken bulrush.

C. L.

IV.—TWELFTH OF AUGUST

[Printed in *The Every-Day Book*, vol. i, Aug. 12, 1825. First collected in *The Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb*, ed. Percy Fitzgerald (Moxon), 1875.]

To the Editor of the Every-Day Book

The Humble Petition of an Unfortunate Day

Sir,

I am a wronged *Day*. I appeal to you as the general patron of the family of the *Days*. The candour with which you attended to the expostulations of a poor relative of ours —a sort of cousin thrice removed [a]—encourages me to hope that you will listen to the complaint of a *Day* of rather more consequence. I am the *Day*, Sir, upon which it pleased the course of nature that your gracious Sovereign should be born. As such, before his Accession, I was always observed and honoured. But since that happy event, in which naturally none had a greater interest than

[a] Twenty-ninth *day* of February [see page 376].

myself, a flaw has been discovered in my title. My lustre has been eclipsed, and—to use the words of one of your own poets,—

I fade into the light of common *day.*

It seems, that about that time, an Impostor crept into Court, who has the effrontery to usurp my honours, and to style herself the *King's-birth-Day*, upon some shallow pretence that, being *St. George's-Day*, she must needs be *King-George's-Day* also. *All-Saints-Day* we have heard of, and *All-Souls-Day* we are willing to admit; but does it follow that this foolish *Twenty-third of April* must be *All-George's-Day*, and enjoy a monopoly of the whole name from George of Cappadocia to George of Leyden, and from George-a-Green down to George Dyer?

It looks a little oddly that I was discarded not long after the dismission of a set of men and measures, with whom I have nothing in common. I hope no whisperer has insinuated into the ears of Royalty, as if I were any thing Whiggishly inclined, when, in my heart, I abhor all these kind of Revolutions, by which I am sure to be the greatest sufferer.

I wonder my shameless Rival can have the face to let the Tower and Park Guns proclaim so many big thundering fibs as they do, upon her Anniversary—making your Sovereign too to be older than he is, by an hundred and odd *days*, which is no great compliment one would think. Consider if this precedent for ante-dating of Births should become general, what confusion it must make in Parish Registers; what crowds of young heirs we should have coming of age before they are one-and-twenty, with numberless similar grievances. If these chops and changes are suffered, we shall have *Lord-Mayor's-Day* eating her custard unauthentically in May, and *Guy Faux* preposterously blazing twice over in the Dog-*days*.

I humbly submit, that it is not within the prerogatives of Royalty itself, to be born twice over. We have read of the supposititious births of Princes, but where are the evidences of this first Birth? why are not the nurses in attendance, the midwife, &c. produced?—the silly story has not so much as a Warming Pan to support it.

My legal advisers, to comfort me, tell me that I have the

right on my side ; that I am the true Birth-*Day*, and the other *Day* is only kept. But what consolation is this to me, as long as this naughty *kept creature* keeps me out of my dues and privileges ?

Pray take my unfortunate case into your consideration, and see that I am restored to my lawful Rejoicings, Firings, Bon-Firings, Illuminations, &c.

And your Petitioner shall ever pray,

Twelfth Day of August.

V.—THE ASS

[Printed in *The Every-Day Book*, vol. i, Oct. 5, 1825. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

For Hone's Every-Day Book

Mr. Collier, in his ' Poetical Decameron ' (Third Conversation) notices a Tract, printed in 1595, with the author's initials only, A. B., entitled ' The Noblenesse of the Asse : a work rare, learned, and excellent '. He has selected the following pretty passage from it. ' He (the Ass) refuseth no burthen, he goes whither he is sent without any contradiction. He lifts not his foote against any one ; he bytes not ; he is no fugitive, nor malicious affected. He doth all things in good sort, and to his liking that hath cause to employ him. If strokes be given him, he cares not for them ; and, as our modern poet singeth,

> Thou wouldst (perhaps) he should become thy foe,
> And to that end dost beat him many times ;
> He cares not for himselfe, much lesse thy blow.[a]

Certainly Nature, forseeing the cruel usage which this useful servant to man should receive at man's hand, did prudently in furnishing him with a tegument impervious to ordinary stripes. The malice of a child, or a weak hand, can make feeble impressions on him. His back offers no mark to a puny foeman. To a common whip or switch his hide presents an absolute insensibility. You might as well pretend to scourge a school-boy with a tough pair

[a] Who this modern poet was, says Mr. C., is a secret worth discovering. —The wood-cut on the title of the Pamphlet is—an Ass with a wreath of laurel round his neck.

of leather breeches on. His jerkin is well fortified. And therefore the Costermongers ' between the years 1790 and 1800 ' did more politicly than piously in lifting up a part of his upper garment. I well remember that beastly and bloody custom. I have often longed to see one of those refiners in discipline himself at the cart's tail, with just such a convenient spot laid bare to the tender mercies of the whipster. But since Nature has resumed her rights, it is to be hoped, that this patient creature does not suffer to extremities ; and that to the savages who still belabour his poor carcase with their blows (considering the sort of anvil they are laid upon) he might in some sort, if he could speak, exclaim with the philosopher, ' Lay on : you beat but upon the case of Anaxarchus.'

Contemplating this natural safeguard, this fortified exterior, it is with pain I view the sleek, foppish, combed and curried, person of this animal, as he is transmuted and disnaturalized at Watering Places, &c. where they affect to make a palfrey of him. Fie on all such sophistications ! —It will never do, Master Groom. Something of his honest shaggy exterior will still peep up in spite of you—his good, rough, native, pine-apple coating. You cannot ' refine a scorpion into a fish, though you rince it and scour it with ever so cleanly cookery '.[a]

The modern poet, quoted by A. B., proceeds to celebrate a virtue, for which no one to this day had been aware that the Ass was remarkable.

> One other gift this beast hath as his owne,
> Wherewith the rest could not be furnished ;
> On man himselfe the same was not bestowne,
> To wit—on him is ne'er engendered
> The hatefull vermine that doth teare the skin
> And to the bode [body] doth make his passage in.

And truly when one thinks on the suit of impenetrable armour with which Nature (like Vulcan to another Achilles) has provided him, these subtle enemies to *our* repose, would have shown some dexterity in getting into *his* quarters. As the bogs of Ireland by tradition expel toads and reptiles, he may well defy these small deer in his fastnesses. It seems the latter had not arrived at the

[a] Milton : *from memory.*

exquisite policy adopted by the human vermin ' between 1790 and 1800 '.

But the most singular and delightful gift of the Ass, according to the writer of this pamphlet, is his *voice ;* the ' goodly, sweet, and continual brayings ' of which, ' whereof they forme a melodious and proportionable kinde of musicke,' seem to have affected him with no ordinary pleasure. ' Nor thinke I ', he adds, ' that any of our immoderne musitians can deny, but that their song is full of exceeding pleasure to be heard ; because therein is to be discerned both concord, discord, singing in the meane, the beginning to sing in large compasse, then following on to rise and fall, the halfe note, whole note, musicke of five voices, firme singing by four voices, three together, or one voice and a halfe. Then their variable contrarieties amongst them, when one delivers forth a long tenor, or a short, the pausing for time, breathing in measure, breaking the minim or very least moment of time. Last of all to heare the musicke of five or six voices chaunged to so many of Asses, is amongst them to heare a song of world without end.'

There is no accounting for ears ; or for that laudable enthusiasm with which an Author is tempted to invest a favourite subject with the most incompatible perfections. I should otherwise, for my own taste, have been inclined rather to have given a place to these extraordinary musicians at that banquet of nothing-less-than-sweet-sounds, imagined by old Jeremy Collier (Essays, 1698 ; Part 2.—On Music), where, after describing the inspiriting effects of martial music in a battle, he hazards an ingenious conjecture, whether a sort of *Anti-music* might not be invented, which should have quite the contrary effect of ' sinking the spirits, shaking the nerves, curdling the blood, and inspiring despair, and cowardice, and consternation '. ' Tis probable ', he says, ' the roaring of lions, the warbling of cats and screech-owls, together with a mixture of the howling of dogs, judiciously imitated and compounded, might go a great way in this invention.' The dose, we confess, is pretty potent, and skilfully enough prepared. But what shall we say to the Ass of Silenus (quoted by Tims), who, if we may trust to classic lore, by his own proper sounds, without thanks to

cat or screech-owl, dismaied and put to rout a whole army of giants ? Here was *Anti-music* with a vengeance ; a whole *Pan-Dis-Harmonicon* in a single lungs of leather !

But I keep you trifling too long on this Asinine subject. I have already passed the *Pons Asinorum*, and will desist, remembering the old pedantic pun of Jem Boyer, my schoolmaster :—

Ass *in præsenti* seldom makes a WISE MAN *in futuro*.

C. L.

VI.—IN RE SQUIRRELS

[Printed in *The Every-Day Book*, vol. i, Oct. 17, 1825. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

For the Every-Day Book

What is gone with the Cages with the climbing Squirrel and bells to them, which were formerly the indispensable appendage to the outside of a Tinman's shop, and were in fact the only Live Signs ? One, we believe, still hangs out on Holborn ; but they are fast vanishing with the good old modes of our ancestors. They seem to have been superseded by that still more ingenious refinement of modern humanity—the Tread-mill ; in which *human* Squirrels still perform a similar round of ceaseless, improgressive clambering ; which must be nuts to them.

We almost doubt the fact of the teeth of this creature being so purely orange-coloured, as Mr. Urban's correspondent gives out. One of our old poets—and they were pretty sharp observers of nature—describes them as brown. But perhaps the naturalist referred to meant ' of the colour of the Maltese orange ',[a] which is rather more obfuscated than your fruit of Seville, or Saint Michael's ; and may help to reconcile the difference. We cannot speak from observation, but we remember at school getting our fingers into the orangery of one of these little gentry (not having

[a] Fletcher in the ' Faithful Shepherdess '.—The Satyr offers to Clorin,

> —grapes whose lusty blood
> Is the learned Poet's good,
> Sweeter yet did never crown
> The head of Bacchus ; nuts more brown
> Than the *squirrels' teeth* that crack them.——

a due caution of the traps set there), and the result proved sourer than lemons. The Author of the Task somewhere speaks of their anger as being 'insignificantly fierce', but we found the demonstration of it on this occasion quite as significant as we desired; and have not been disposed since to look any of these 'gift horses' in the mouth. Maiden aunts keep these 'small deer' as they do parrots, to bite people's fingers, on purpose to give them good advice 'not to venture so near the cage another time'. As for their 'six quavers divided into three quavers and a dotted crotchet', I suppose they may go into Jeremy Bentham's next budget of Fallacies, along with the 'melodious and proportionable kinde of musicke', recorded in your last number of another highly gifted animal.

C. L.

VII.—AN APPEARANCE OF THE SEASON

[Printed, with a woodcut entitled, "THE BEADLE.—'The great image of authority!'—*Shakspeare,*" in *The Every-Day Book*, vol. ii, Jan. 28, 1826; no signature. First collected in *The Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb*, ed. Percy Fitzgerald (Moxon), 1875.]

Apology will scarcely be required for introducing a character, who at this season of the year comes forth in renovated honours, and may aptly be termed one of its *ever-blues*—not a peculiar of either Farringdons, nor him of Cripplegate, or St. Giles in the Fields, or of any ward or precinct within the bills: not this or that 'good man'—but the *universal parish beadle.* 'How Christmas and consolatory he looks! how redolent of good cheer is he! He is a cornucopia—an abundance. What pudding sleeves! —what a collar, red, and like a beef steak, is his! He is a walking refreshment! He looks like a whole parish, full, important—but untaxed. The children of charity gaze at him with a modest smile. The straggling boys look on him with confidence. They do not pocket their marbles. They do not fly from their familiar gutter. This is a red letter day; and the cane is reserved for to-morrow.'

For the pleasant verbal description we are indebted to an agreeable writer in the 'London Magazine' [a]; his corporal

[a] For Dec. 1822.

lineaments are 'borrowed' (with permission) from a new caricature,[a] if it may be given so low a name, wherein this figure stands out, the very gem and jewel, in a grouping of characters of all sorts and denominations assembled with 'infinite fancy' and 'fun', to illustrate the designer's views of the age. It is a graphic satire of character rather than caricatura; mostly of class-characters, not persons; wherein the ridicule bears heavily, but is broad and comprehensive enough to shift from one neighbour to another.

VIII—THE MONTHS

[Printed in *The Every-Day Book*, vol. ii, April 16, 1826. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

For the Every-Day Book

Rummaging over the contents of an old stall at a half *book*, half *old iron shop*, in an alley leading from Wardour-street to Soho-square yesterday, I lit upon a ragged duodecimo, which had been the strange delight of my infancy, and which I had lost sight of for more than forty years:—the 'QUEEN-LIKE CLOSET, or RICH CABINET': written by Hannah Woolly, and printed for R. C. & T. S. 1681; being an abstract of receipts in cookery, confectionery, cosmetics, needlework, morality, and all such branches of what were then considered as female accomplishments. The price demanded was sixpence, which the owner (a squab duodecimo of a character himself) enforced with the assurance that his 'own mother should not have it for a farthing less'. On my demurring at this extraordinary assertion, the dirty little vendor reinforced his assertion with a sort of oath, which seemed more than the occasion demanded: 'and now (said he) I have put my soul to it'. Pressed by so solemn an asseveration, I could no longer resist a demand which seemed to set me, however unworthy, upon a level with his dearest relations; and depositing a tester, I bore away the tattered prize in triumph. I remembered a gorgeous description of the

[a] The Progress of Cant; designed and etched by one of the authors of 'Odes and Addresses to Great People'; and published by T. Maclean, Haymarket, L. Relfe, Cornhill; and Dickenson, New Bond-Street.

twelve months of the year, which I thought would be a fine substitute for those poetical descriptions of them which your *Every-Day Book* had nearly exhausted out of Spenser. This will be a treat, thought I, for friend HONE. To memory they seemed no less fantastic and splendid than the other. But, what are the mistakes of childhood !—on reviewing them, they turned out to be only a set of common-place receipts for working the seasons, months, heathen gods and goddesses, &c., in *samplars !* Yet as an instance of the homely occupations of our great-grandmothers, they may be amusing to some readers : 'I have seen,' says the notable Hannah Woolly, 'such Ridiculous things done in work, as it is an abomination to any Artist to behold. As for Example : You may find in some Pieces, *Abraham* and *Sarah*, and many other Persons of Old time, Cloathed, as they go now-a-daies, and truly sometimes worse ; for they most resemble the Pictures on Ballads. Let all Ingenious Women have regard, that when they work any Image, to represent it aright. First, let it be Drawn well, and then observe the Directions which are given by Knowing Men. I do assure you, I never durst work any Scripture-Story without informing my self from the Ground of it : nor any other Story, or single Person, without informing my self both of the Visage and Habit ; As followeth.

'If you work *Jupiter, the Imperial feigned god*, He must have long Black-Curled hair, a Purple Garment trimmed with Gold, and sitting upon a Golden Throne, with bright yellow Clouds about him.'

THE TWELVE MONTHS OF THE YEAR

March.—Is drawn in Tawny, with a fierce aspect, a Helmet upon his head, and leaning on a Spade, and a Basket of Garden Seeds in his Left hand, and in his Right hand the Sign of *Aries ;* And Winged.

April.—A Young Man in Green, with a Garland of Mirtle, and Hawthorn-Buds ; Winged ; in one hand Primroses and Violets, in the other the Sign *Taurus.*

May.—With a sweet and lovely Countenance, clad in a Robe of White and Green, embroidered with several

Flowers, upon his Head a garland of all manner of Roses; on the one hand a Nightingale, in the other a Lute. His Sign must be *Gemini*.

June.—In a Mantle of dark Grass-green, upon his Head a garland of Bents, Kings-Cups, and Maiden-hair; in his Left hand an Angle, with a box of Cantharides, in his Right, the Sign *Cancer*, and upon his arms a Basket of seasonable Fruits.

July.—In a Jacket of light Yellow, eating Cherries; with his Face and Bosom Sun-burnt; on his Head a wreath of Centaury and wild Tyme; a Seith on his shoulder, and a Bottle at his girdle: carrying the Sign *Leo*.

August.—A Young Man of fierce and Cholerick aspect, in a Flame-coloured Garment; upon his Head a garland of Wheat and Rye, upon his Arm a Basket of all manner of ripe Fruits, at his Belt a Sickle. His Sign *Virgo*.

September.—A merry and cheerful Countenance, in a Purple Robe, upon his Head a Wreath of red and white Grapes, in his Left hand a handful of Oats, withal carrying a Horn of Plenty, full of all manner of ripe Fruits, in his Right hand the Sign *Libra*.

October.—In a Garment of Yellow and Carnation, upon his head a garland of Oak-leaves with Akorns, in his Right hand the Sign *Scorpio*, in his Left hand a Basket of Medlars, Services, and Chestnuts; and any other Fruits then in Season.

November.—In a Garment of Changeable Green and Black, upon his Head a garland of Olives with the Fruit in his Left hand, Bunches of Parsnips and Turnips in his Right. His Sign *Sagittarius*.

December.—A horrid and fearful aspect, clad in Irish-Rags, or coarse Freez girt unto him, upon his Head three or four Night-Caps, and over them a Turkish Turbant; his Nose red, his Mouth and Beard clog'd with Isicles, at his back a bundle of Holly, Ivy or Misletoe, holding in fur'd Mittens the Sign of *Capricornus*.

January.—Clad all in White, as the Earth looks with the Snow, blowing his Nails; in his Left Arm a Billet, the Sign *Aquarius* standing by his side.

February.—Cloathed in a dark Skie-colour, carrying in his Right hand the Sign *Pisces*.

The following receipt, '*To dress up a Chimney very fine for the Summer time, as I have done many, and they have been liked very well*,' may not be unprofitable to the housewives of this century.

'First, take a pack-thred, and fasten it even to the inner part of the Chimney, so high as that you can see no higher as you walk up and down the House; you must drive in several Nails to hold up all your work; then get good store of old green Moss from Trees, and melt an equal proportion of Bees-wax and Rosin together, and while it is hot, dip the wrong ends of the Moss in it, and presently clap it upon your pack-thred, and press it down hard with your hand; you must make hast, else it will cool before you can fasten it, and then it will fall down; do so all round where the pack-thred goes, and the next row you must joyn to that so that it may seem all in one; thus do till you have finished it down to the bottom: then take some other kind of Moss, of a whitish-colour and stiff, and of several sorts or kinds, and place that upon the other, here and there carelessly, and in some places put a good deal, and some a little; then any kind of fine Snail-shells, in which the Snails are dead, and little Toad stools, which are very old, and look like Velvet, or *any other thing that is old and pretty;* place it here and there as your fancy serves, and fasten all with Wax and Rosin. Then for the Hearth of your Chimney, you may lay some Orpan-Sprigs in order all over, and it will grow as it lies; and according to the Season, get what flowers you can, and stick in as if they grew, and a few sprigs of Sweet-Bryer: the Flowers you must renew every Week; but the Moss will last all the Summer, till it will be time to make a fire; and the Orpan will last near two Months. A Chimney thus done doth grace a Room exceedingly.'

One phrase in the above should particularly recommend it to such of your female readers, as, in the nice language of the day, have done growing some time: 'little toad stools, &c. and any thing that is *old and pretty*.' Was ever antiquity so smoothed over? The culinary recipes have nothing remarkable in them, besides the costliness of them. Every thing (to the meanest meats) is sopped in claret, steeped in claret, basted with claret, as if claret were as cheap

as ditch water. I remember Bacon recommends opening a turf or two in your garden-walks, and pouring into each a bottle of claret, to recreate the sense of smelling, being no less grateful than beneficial. We hope the chancellor of the exchequer will attend to this in his next reduction of French wines, that we may once more water our gardens with right Bordeaux. The medical recipes are as whimsical as they are cruel. Our ancestors were not at all effeminate on this head. Modern sentimentalists would shrink at a cock plucked and bruised in a mortar alive, to make a cullis ; or a live mole baked in an oven (*be sure it be alive*) to make a powder for consumption.—But the whimsicalest of all are the directions to servants—(for this little book is a compendium of all duties,)—the footman is seriously admonished not to stand lolling against his master's chair, while he waits at table ; for ' to lean on a Chair when they wait, is a particular favour shown to any superior Servant, as the Chief Gentleman, or the Waiting Woman when she rises from the Table '. Also he must not ' hold the Plates before his mouth to be defiled with his Breath, nor touch them on the right (inner) side '. Surely Swift must have seen this little treatise.

C. L.

Hannah concludes with the following address, by which the self-estimate which she formed of her usefulness, may be calculated :—

Ladies, I hope you're pleas'd, and so shall I,
If what I've Writ, you may be gainers by :
If not ; it is your fault, it is not mine,
Your benefit in this I do design.
Much labour and much time it hath me cost
Therefore I beg, let none of it be lost.
The Mony you shall pay for this my Book,
You'l not repent of, when in it you look.
No more at present to you I shall say,
But wish you all the happiness I may.

H. W.

IX.—REMINISCENCE OF SIR JEFFERY DUNSTAN

[Printed in *The Every-Day Book*, vol. ii, June 22, 1826. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

To the Editor of the Every-Day Book

To your account of sir Jeffery Dunstan in columns 829–30 (where, by an unfortunate Erratum, the effigies of *two Sir Jefferys* appear, when the uppermost figure is clearly meant for sir Harry Dimsdale) you may add, that the writer of this has frequently met him in his latter days, about 1790 or 1791, returning in an evening, after his long day's itinerancy, to his domicile—a wretched shed in the most beggarly purlieu of Bethnal Green, a little on this side the Mile-end Turnpike. The lower figure in that leaf most correctly describes his then appearance, except that no graphic art can convey an idea of the general squalor of it, and of his bag (his constant concomitant) in particular. Whether it contained 'old wigs' at that time I know not, but it seemed a fitter repository for bones snatched out of kennels, than for any part of a Gentleman's dress even at second hand.

The Ex-member for Garrat was a melancholy instance of a great man whose popularity is worn out. He still carried his sack, but it seemed a part of his identity rather than an implement of his profession; a badge of past grandeur; could any thing have divested him of *that*, he would have shown a 'poor forked animal' indeed. My life upon it, it contained no curls at the time I speak of. The most decayed and spiritless remnants of what was once a peruke would have scorned the filthy case; would absolutely have 'burst its cearments'. No, it was empty, or brought home bones, or a few cinders possibly. A strong odour of burnt bones, I remember, blended with the scent of horse-flesh seething into dog's meat, and only relieved a little by the breathings of a few brick kilns, made up the atmosphere of the delicate suburban spot, which this great man had chosen for the last scene of his earthly vanities. The cry of 'old wigs' had ceased with the possession of any such fripperies; his sack might have contained not unaptly a little mould to scatter upon that grave, to which he was now advancing; but it told of vacancy and desola-

tion. His quips were silent too, and his brain was empty as his sack; he slank along, and seemed to decline popular observation. If a few boys followed him, it seemed rather from habit, than any expectation of fun.

> Alas! how changed from *him*,
> The life of humour, and the soul of whim,
> Gallant and gay on Garrat's hustings proud.

But it is thus that the world rewards its favourites in decay. What faults he had, I know not. I have heard something of a peccadillo or so. But some little deviation from the precise line of rectitude, might have been winked at in so tortuous and stigmatic a frame. Poor Sir Jeffery! it were well if some M.P.'s in earnest had passed their parliamentary existence with no more offences against integrity, than could be laid to thy charge! A fair dismissal was thy due, not so unkind a degradation; some little snug retreat, with a bit of green before thine eyes, and not a burial alive in the fetid beggaries of Bethnal. Thou wouldst have ended thy days in a manner more appropriate to thy pristine dignity, installed in munificent mockery (as in mock honours you had lived)—a Poor Knight of Windsor!

Every distinct place of public speaking demands an oratory peculiar to itself. The forensic fails within the walls of St. Stephen. Sir Jeffery was a living instance of this, for in the flower of his popularity an attempt was made to bring him out upon the stage (at which of the winter theatres I forget, but I well remember the anecdote) in the part of *Doctor Last*. The announcement drew a crowded house; but notwithstanding infinite tutoring—by Foote, or Garrick, I forget which—when the curtain drew up, the heart of Sir Jeffery failed, and he faultered on, and made nothing of his part, till the hisses of the house at last in very kindness dismissed him from the boards. Great as his parliamentary eloquence had shown itself; brilliantly as his off-hand sallies had sparkled on a hustings; they here totally failed him. Perhaps he had an aversion to borrowed wit; and, like my Lord Foppington, disdained to entertain himself (or others) with the forced products of another man's brain. Your man of quality is more diverted with the natural sprouts of his own.

C. L.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HONE'S *TABLE BOOK*

I.—NOTES, ETC., TO EXTRACTS FROM THE GARRICK PLAYS

[The Extracts appeared in *The Table Book* (ed. William Hone), 1827, and were collected in *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, etc. A New Edition. In Two Volumes.* Moxon. 1835.]

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,—It is not unknown to you, that about nineteen years since I published 'Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, who lived about the time of Shakspere'. For the scarcer Plays I had recourse to the Collection bequeathed to the British Museum by Mr. Garrick. But my time was but short, and my subsequent leisure has discovered in it a treasure rich and exhaustless beyond what I then imagined. In it is to be found almost every production in the shape of a Play that has appeared in print, from the time of the old Mysteries and Moralities to the days of Crowne and D'Urfey. Imagine the luxury to one like me, who, above every other form of Poetry, have ever preferred the Dramatic, of sitting in the princely apartments, for such they are, of poor condemned Montagu House, which I predict will not speedily be followed by a handsomer, and culling at will the flower of some thousand Dramas. It is like having the range of a Nobleman's Library, with the Librarian to your friend. Nothing can exceed the courteousness and attentions of the gentleman who has the chief direction of the Reading-rooms here; and you have scarce to ask for a volume, before it is laid before you. If the occasional extracts which I have been tempted to bring away, may find an appropriate place in your *Table Book*, some of them are weekly at your service. By those who remember the 'Specimens', these must be considered as mere after-gleanings, supplementary to that work, only comprising a longer period. You must be content with sometimes a scene, sometimes a song; a speech or passage, or a poetical image, as they happen to strike me. I read without order of time; I am a poor hand at dates; and

for any biography of the dramatists, I must refer to writers who are more skilful in such matters. My business is with their poetry only.

Your well-wisher,

January 27, 1827. C. LAMB.

ROBERT DAVENPORT

King John and Matilda: a Tragedy. Acted in 1651.—[John not being able to bring Matilda, the chaste daughter of the old Baron Fitzwater, to compliance with his wishes, causes her to be poisoned in a nunnery.

> And thou, Fitzwater, reflect upon thy *name*,
> And turn the *Son of Tears*.]

This scene has much passion and poetry in it, if I mistake not. The last words of Fitzwater are an instance of noble temperament; but to understand him, the character throughout of this mad, merry, feeling, insensible-seeming lord, should be read. That the venomous John could have even counterfeited repentance so well, is out of nature; but, supposing the possibility, nothing is truer than the way in which it is managed. These old play-wrights invested their bad characters with notions of good, which could by no possibility have co-existed with their actions. Without a soul of goodness in himself, how could Shakspere's *Richard the Third* have lit upon those sweet phrases and inducements by which he attempts to win over the dowager queen to let him wed her daughter. It is not nature's nature, but imagination's substituted nature, which does almost as well in a fiction.

JOHN DAY

The Parliament of Bees: a Masque. Printed 1607.—Whether this singular production, in which the characters are all *Bees*, was ever acted, I have no information to determine. It is at least as capable of representation as we can conceive the 'Birds' of Aristophanes to have been.

> [*Ulania, a female Bee, speaks:*] Philon, a Bee
> Well-skilled in verse and amorous poetry,
> As we have sate at work, both of one Rose,
> Has humm'd sweet canzons, both in verse and prose,
> Which I ne'er minded.

Prettily pilfered from the sweet passage in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, where Helena recounts to Hermia their school-days' friendship :—

> We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
> Created with our needles both one flower,
> Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion.
>
> ———The doings,
> The births, the wars, the wooings,

of these pretty little winged creatures are with continued liveliness portrayed throughout the whole of this curious old drama, in words which bees would talk with, could they talk ; the very air seems replete with humming and buzzing melodies, while we read them. Surely bees were never so be-rhymed before.

JOHN FOUNTAIN

The Rewards of Virtue ; A Comedy, 1661.—[A victorious General may owe his laurels to the tears and intercessions of some virgin Shepherdess.]

Is it possible that Cowper might have remembered this sentiment in his description of the advantages which the world, that scorns him, may derive from the noiseless hours of the contemplative man ?—

> Perhaps she owes
> Her sunshine and her rain, her blooming spring,
> And plenteous harvest, to the prayer he makes,
> When, Isaac-like, the solitary saint
> Walks forth to meditate at eventide,
> And think on her, who thinks not on herself.—*Task.*

THOMAS HEYWOOD

Fortune by Land and Sea. A Comedy.—If I were to be consulted as to a Reprint of our old English Dramatists, I should advise to begin with the collected Plays of Heywood. He was a fellow Actor, and fellow Dramatist, with Shakspeare. He possessed not the imagination of the latter; but in all those qualities which gained for Shakspeare the attribute of *gentle*, he was not inferior to him. Generosity, courtesy, temperance in the depths of passion ; sweetness, in a word, and gentleness ; Christianism ; and true hearty Anglicism of feelings, shaping that Christianism ;

shine throughout his beautiful writings in a manner more conspicuous than in those of Shakspeare, but only more conspicuous, inasmuch as in Heywood these qualities are primary, in the other subordinate to poetry. I love them both equally, but Shakspeare has most of my wonder. Heywood should be known to his countrymen, as he deserves. His plots are almost invariably English. I am sometimes jealous, that Shakspeare laid so few of his scenes at home. I laud Ben Jonson, for that in one instance having framed the first draught of his *Every Man in his Humour* in Italy, he changed the scene, and Anglicised his characters. The names of them in the First Edition, may not be unamusing.

Men.	
Lorenzo, Sen.	Peto.
Lorenzo, Jun.	Pizo.
Prospero.	Matheo (Master Matthew).
Thorello.	
Stephano (Master Stephen).	*Women.*
Dr. Clement (Justice Clement).	Giulliana.
Bobadilla (Bobadil).	Biancha.
Musco.	Hesperida.
Cob (the same in English).	Tib (the same in English).

How say you, Reader ? Do not Master Kitely, Mistress Kitely, Master Knowell, Brainworm, &c., read better than these Cisalpines ?

[ROBERT WILMOT]

Tancred and Gismund, 1591.—Nearly a century after the date of this drama, Dryden produced his admirable version of the same story from Boccaccio. The speech here extracted may be compared with the corresponding passage in the Sigismonda and Guiscardo, with no disadvantage to the elder performance. It is quite as weighty, as pointed, and as passionate.

HENRY PORTER

The Two Angry Women of Abingdon : a Comedy, 1599.—This pleasant comedy is contemporary with some of the earliest of Shakspeare's, and is no wit inferior to either the

Comedy of Errors, or the *Taming of the Shrew*, for instance. It is full of business, humour, and merry malice. Its night-scenes are peculiarly sprightly and wakeful. The versification unencumbered, and rich with compound epithets. Why do we go on with ever new editions of Ford, and Massinger, and the thrice reprinted Selections of Dodsley? What we want is as many volumes more, as these latter consist of, filled with plays (such as this), of which we know comparatively nothing. Not a third part of the treasures of old English dramatic literature has been exhausted. Are we afraid that the genius of Shakspeare would suffer in our estimate by the disclosure? He would indeed be somewhat lessened as a miracle and a prodigy. But he would lose no height by the confession. When a giant is shown to us, does it detract from the curiosity to be told that he has at home a gigantic brood of brethren, less only than himself? Along *with* him, not *from* him, sprang up the race of mighty dramatists, who, compared with the Otways and Rowes that followed, were as Miltons to a Young or an Akenside. That he was their elder brother, not their parent, is evident from the fact of the very few direct imitations of him to be found in their writings. Webster, Dekker, Heywood, and the rest of his great contemporaries went on their own ways, and followed their individual impulses, not blindly prescribing to themselves his tract. Marlowe, the true (though imperfect) father of our *tragedy*, preceded him. The *comedy* of Fletcher is essentially unlike to that of his. 'Tis out of no detracting spirit that I speak thus, for the plays of Shakspeare have been the strongest and the sweetest food of my mind from infancy; but I resent the comparative obscurity in which some of his most valuable co-operators remain, who were his dear intimates, his stage and his chamber-fellows while he lived, and to whom his gentle spirit doubtlessly then awarded the full portion of their genius, as from them towards himself appears to have been no grudging of his acknowledged excellence.

THOMAS HEYWOOD

The Fair Maid of the Exchange, 1607.—After this Specimen of the pleasanter vein of Heywood, I am tempted to extract some lines from Heywood's 'Hierarchie of Angels,

1634'; not strictly as a Dramatic Poem, but because the passage contains a string of names, all, but that of *Watson*, his contemporary Dramatists. He is complaining in a mood half serious, half comic, of the disrespect which Poets in his own times meet with from the world, compared with the honours paid them by antiquity. *Then*, they could afford them three or four sonorous names, and at full length; as to Ovid, the addition of Publius Naso Sulmensis; to Seneca, that of Lucius Annæus Cordubensis; and the like. *Now*, says he,

> Our modern Poets to that pass are driven,
> Those names are curtail'd which they first had given;
> And, as we wish'd to have their memories drown'd,
> We scarcely can afford them half their sound.
> Greene, who had in both Academies ta'en
> Degree of Master, yet could never gain
> To be call'd more than Robin: who, had he
> Professed aught save the Muse, served, and been free
> After a seven years' 'prenticeship, might have
> (With credit too) gone Robert to his grave.
> Marlowe, renown'd for his rare art and wit,
> Could ne'er attain beyond the name of Kit;
> Although his Hero and Leander did
> Merit addition rather. Famous Kid
> Was call'd but Tom. Tom Watson, though he wrote
> Able to make Apollo's self to dote
> Upon his Muse; for all that he could strive,
> Yet never could to his full name arrive.
> Tom Nash (in his time of no small esteem)
> Could not a second syllable redeem.
> Excellent Beaumont, in the foremost rank
> Of the rarest wits, was never more than Frank.
> Mellifluous Shakspere, whose enchanting quill
> Commanded mirth or passion, was but Will;
> And Famous Jonson, though his learned pen
> Be dipp'd in Castaly, is still but Ben.
> Fletcher, and Webster, of that learned pack
> None of the meanest, neither was but Jack;
> Dekker's but Tom; nor May, nor Middleton;
> And he's now but Jack Ford, that once was John.

Possibly our Poet was a little sore, that this contemptuous curtailment of their baptismal names was chiefly exercised upon his poetical brethren of the *Drama*. We hear nothing about Sam Daniel or Ned Spenser, in his catalogue. The familiarity of common discourse might probably take the greater liberties with the Dramatic Poets, as conceiving of

them as more upon a level with the Stage Actors. Or did their greater publicity, and popularity in consequence, fasten these diminutives upon them out of a feeling of love and kindness, as we say Harry the Fifth, rather than Henry, when we would express goodwill ?—as himself says, in those reviving words put into his mouth by Shakspeare, where he would comfort and confirm his doubting brothers :—

> Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
> But Harry, Harry !

And doubtless Heywood had an indistinct conception of this truth, when (coming to his own name), with that beautiful *retracting* which is natural to one that, not satirical given, has wandered a little out of his way into something recriminative, he goes on to say :—

> Nor speak I this, that any here exprest
> Should think themselves less worthy than the rest
> Whose names have their full syllables and sound ;
> Or that Frank, Kit, or Jack, are the least wound
> Unto their fame and merit. I for my part
> (Think others what they please) accept that heart,
> Which courts my love in most familiar phrase ;
> And that it takes not from my pains or praise,
> If any one to me so bluntly come :
> I hold he loves me best that calls me Tom.

ABRAHAM COWLEY

The Guardian : a Comedy, 1650.—This was the first draught of that which he published afterwards under the title of the *Cutter of Coleman Street ;* and contains the character of a foolish poet, omitted in the latter. The *Cutter* has always appeared to me the link between the comedy of Fletcher and of Congreve. In the elegant passion of the love scenes it approaches the former ; and Puny (the character substituted for the omitted poet) is the Prototype of the half-witted Wits, the Brisks and Dapperwits, of the latter.

THOMAS HEYWOOD

The Brazen Age : An Historical Play, 1613.—I cannot take leave of this Drama without noticing a touch of the truest pathos, which the writer has put into the mouth of Meleager, as he is wasting away by the operation of the fatal brand, administered to him by his wretched Mother.

My flame increaseth still—Oh Father Œneus;
And you, Althea, whom I would call Mother,
But that my genius prompts me thou'rt unkind:
And yet farewell!

What is the boasted 'Forgive me, but forgive me!' of the dying wife of Shore in Rowe, compared with these three little words?

[GEORGE PEELE]

The Battle of Alcazar: a Tragedy, 1594.—[Muly Mahamet, driven from his throne into a desert, robs the lioness to feed his fainting wife Calipolis.]

Muly. Hold thee, Calipolis; feed and faint no more, &c.

This address, for its barbaric splendour of conception, extravagant vein of promise, not to mention some idiomatic peculiarities, and the very structure of the verse, savours strongly of Marlowe; but the real author, I believe, is unknown.

ROBERT YARRINGTON

Who wrote in the reign of Elizabeth.

Two Tragedies in One.—It is curious that this old play comprises the distinct action of two atrocities; the one a vulgar murder, committed in our own Thames Street, with the names and incidents truly and historically set down; the other a Murder in high life, supposed to be acting at the same time in Italy, the scenes alternating between that country and England: the story of the latter is *mutatis mutandis* no other than that of our own *Babes in the Wood*, transferred to Italy, from delicacy no doubt to some of the family of the rich Wicked Uncle, who might yet be living. The treatment of the two differs as the romance-like narratives in *God's Revenge against Murder*, in which the Actors of the Murders (with the trifling exception that they *were Murderers*) are represented as most accomplished and every way amiable young Gentlefolks of either sex—as much as *that* differs from the honest unglossing pages of the homely Newgate Ordinary.

[*Truth, the Chorus, to the Spectators:*] . . . I see your sorrows flow
up to the brim
And overflow your cheeks with briny tears:

But though this sight bring surfeit to the eye,
Delight your ears with pleasing harmony,
That ears may countercheck your eyes, and say,
'Why shed you tears? this deed is but a *Play*.'

The whole theory of the reason of our delight in Tragic Representations, which has cost so many elaborate chapters of Criticism, is condensed in these last four lines: *Aristotle quintessentialized.*

SONG IN GEORGE PEELE'S DRAMATIC PASTORAL 'THE ARRAIGNMENT OF PARIS', 1584

To my esteemed friend, and excellent musician, V. N., Esq.

Dear Sir,—I conjure you in the name of all the Sylvan deities, and of the Muses, whom you honour, and they reciprocally love and honour you,—rescue this old and passionate *ditty*—the very flower of an old *forgotten pastoral*, which had it been in all parts equal, the Faithful Shepherdess of Fletcher had been but a second name in this sort of writing ——rescue it from the profane hands of every common composer: and in one of your tranquillest moods, when you have most leisure from those sad thoughts, which sometimes unworthily beset you; yet a mood, in itself not unallied to the better sort of melancholy; laying by for once the lofty organ, with which you shake the Temples: attune, as to the pipe of Paris himself, to some milder and more love-according instrument, this pretty courtship between Paris and his (then-not-as-yet-forsaken) Œnone. Oblige me, and all more knowing judges of music and of poesy, by the adaptation of fit musical numbers, which it only wants to be the rarest love dialogue in our language.

Your implorer,
C. L.

SIR RICHARD FANSHAW'S

Translation of 'Querer por Sola Querer'—'To Love for Love's Sake': a Romantic Drama, written in Spanish by Mendoza, 1623.—[Felisbravo, Prince of Persia, from a picture sent him of the brave Amazonian Queen of Tartary, Zelidaura, becoming enamoured, sets out for that realm; in his way thither disenchants a Queen of Araby; but

first, overcome by fatigue, falls asleep in the enchanted grove, where Zelidaura herself coming by, steals the picture from him. The passion of the romance arises from his remorse at being taken so negligent; and her disdain that he should sleep, having the company of her picture. She here plays upon him, who does not yet know her, in the disguise of a Rustic.]

To my taste this is fine, elegant, queen-like raillery; a second part of *Love's Labour Lost*, to which title this extraordinary play has still better pretensions than even Shakspeare's; for after leading three pair of royal lovers through endless mazes of doubts; difficulties; oppositions of dead fathers' wills; a labyrinth of losings and findings; jealousies; enchantments; conflicts with giants, and single-handed against armies; to the exact state in which all the lovers might with the greatest propriety indulge their reciprocal wishes—when, the deuce is in it, you think, but they must all be married now—suddenly the three ladies turn upon their lovers: and, as an exemplification of the moral of the play, 'Loving for Loving's sake,' and a hyperplatonic, truly Spanish proof of their affections—demand that the lovers shall consent to their mistresses' taking upon them the vow of a single life! to which the gallants, with becoming refinement, can do no less than consent.—The fact is that it was a court play, in which the characters—males, giants, and all—were played by females, and those of the highest order of Grandeeship. No nobleman might be permitted amongst them; and it was against the forms, that a great court lady of Spain should consent to such an unrefined motion, as that of wedlock, though but in a play.

Appended to the drama, the length of which may be judged from its having taken nine days in the representation, and me three hours in the reading of it—hours well wasted—is a poetical account of a fire, which broke out in the theatre on one of the nights of its acting, when the whole of the dramatis personæ were nearly burnt, because the common people out of 'base fear', and the nobles out of 'pure respect', could not think of laying hands upon such 'Great Donnas'; till the young king, breaking the etiquette, by snatching up his queen, and bearing her through the flames

upon his back, the grandees (dilatory Æneases), followed his example, and each saved one (Anchises-fashion), till the whole courtly company of comedians were got off in tolerable safety.—Imagine three or four stout London firemen, on such an occasion, standing off in mere respect.

GEORGE CHAPMAN

Bussy D'Ambois : A Tragedy, 1607.—[D'Ambois invokes a Spirit of Intelligence, to reveal to him the fate of Tamyra, whose intrigue with him has been discovered by her Husband.]

This calling upon Light and Darkness for information, but, above all, the description of the Spirit—'Threw his changed countenance headlong into clouds'—is tremendous, to the curdling of the blood. I know nothing in Poetry like it.

JOHN WEBSTER

The Devil's Law Case : A Tragi-comedy, 1623.—Webster was parish clerk at St. Andrew's, Holborn. The anxious recurrence to church-matters; sacrilege; tomb-stones; with the frequent introduction of *dirges* in this, and his other tragedies, may be traced to his professional sympathies.

THOMAS HEYWOOD

A Challenge for Beauty : A Tragi-comedy, 1636.—[In the Prologue to this Play, Heywood commends the English Plays; not without a censure of some writers, who in his time had begun to degenerate.] The foundations of the English Drama were laid deep in *tragedy* by Marlowe, and others—Marlowe especially—while our *comedy* was yet in its lisping state. To this tragic preponderance (forgetting his own sweet Comedies, and Shakspeare's), Heywood seems to refer with regret; as in the 'Roscian Strain' he evidently alludes to Alleyn, who was great in the 'Jew of Malta', as Heywood elsewhere testifies, and in the principal tragic parts both of Marlowe and Shakspeare.

JAMES SHIRLEY

The Traitor : A Tragedy, 1635.

> *Amidea.* I shall climb up those high and rugged cliffs
> Without a hand—

My transcript breaks off here. Perhaps what follows was of less value; or perhaps I broke off, as I own I have sometimes done, to leave in my readers a relish, and an inclination to explore for themselves the genuine fountains of these old dramatic delicacies.

II.—OF MAID MARIAN AND ROBIN HOOD

I

The following communication from a 'matter-of-fact' correspondent, controverts an old dramatist's authority on an historical point. It should be recollected, however, that poets have large licence, and that few playwrights strictly adhere to facts without injury to poetical character and feeling. The letter is curious, and might suggest an amusing parallel in the manner of Plutarch, between the straight-forward character and the poetical one.

TO THE EDITOR

[*The Table Book*, May 17, 1827]

Sir,—Having been in the country during the publication of the first parts of the Table Book, I have but now just bought them; and on perusing them, I find in Part I, col. 112 infrâ, Mr. C. Lamb's first specimen of the Garrick Plays, called *King John and Matilda*; wherein the said Matilda, the daughter of the old baron [a] Fitzwater, is supposed to be poisoned by King John's order, in a nunnery. She is specially entitled therein as 'immaculate'—'Virtue's white *virgin*,'—and '*maid* and martyr'. Now, sir, I presume it to be well-known, that in the best legends extant of the times of Richard I and John, this identical Matilda, or Maud Fitzwater, is chronicled as the *chère amie* and companion of the outlawed Robert Fitzooth, Earl of Huntingdon, whom as 'Robin Hood' she followed as '*Maid* Marian'; and with whom, on his restoration of his honours by King Richard (to his earldom and estates) she intermarried, and became Countess of Huntingdon, and was in *every* respect a wife, though we have no records whether she ever became a mother; and that when by King John the Earl was again outlawed, and driven to the wilds of Sherwood forest, his countess also again shared

[a] This is an error of the poet's. His real name was Fitz-Walter, *i.e.*, *the son of Walter*.

his misfortunes and a second time took the name of '*Maid* Marian', (then rather a misnomer,) as he did that of 'Robin Hood'.

During the *first* outlawry of Robin Hood, and while Marian, or more properly Matilda, was yet a *maid*, John (then Prince John, Richard being in Palestine) made overtures to the old baron Fitzwalter for his daughter as a mistress, and being refused, and finding she was in the society of Robin Hood and his merry men, attacked them, and a bloody fray ensued; during which John and Matilda (in the *male* costume of forest green) met, and fought; John required her to yield, and she as resolutely desired him, in a reproachful taunt, to *win* her first, and so stoutly did she belabour him, as the rest of the foresters did his party also, that he was constrained to yield, and to withdraw from a contest in which nothing was to be got but blows.

We hear nothing more of any attempts of John's to molest her or her party till after the death of Richard, and his own accession to the throne, when he spitefully ousted the Earl and Countess from their honours and possessions, and confiscated all to his own use; and thus this unfortunate pair, as I have above stated, were again constrained to quit the castle for the forest.

But it is certain, that long before John became King, Matilda, alias Maud, alias Marian, had ceased to be a maid; and we have no accounts of any attempts whatsoever made by *King* John upon or against the quondam Matilda Fitzwalter, afterwards alternately Maid Marian and Countess of Huntingdon. Indeed, all the legends of Robin Hood's life present 'Maid Marian', as having lived with him unmolested by any such attempts during the whole of his *second outlawry*, and as having survived Robin's tragical end; though of *her* subsequent fate they are all silent, expressing themselves indeed ignorant of what was her destiny. Certainly she may then have retired into a nunnery, but at all events not as Matilda Fitzwalter; for she had been legally married and formally acknowledged by Richard I. as Countess of Huntingdon; and as she spent the best part of her fellowship with her husband in Sherwood forest under her romantic forest appellation, it is scarcely

probable that she would resume her title on entering into a nunnery. I would presume, therefore, that however and wherever she ended her days, it must have been under the cognomen of '*Maid Marian*'. As her husband lived for some years in the forest after the accession of John, I would think it scarcely likely, that after such a great lapse of time, and after the change had taken place in Matilda both as regards her worldly station and age, and I should presume person (from such a continual exposure to the air and weather,) John should renew any attempt upon her. I should therefore feel exceedingly gratified if either yourself or Mr. C. Lamb could adduce any historical facts to reconcile all the discrepancies, and to show how the facts, as supposed in the play of *King John and Matilda*, could, in the natural course of events, and in the very teeth of the declarations made in the history of Robin Hood and his consort, have taken place.

Mark this also;—the historians of Robin Hood and Marian (and their history was written, if not by contemporaries, yet in the next generation; nor is it likely that such a renowned personage should be unnoticed in chronicles for any space of time) all declare that they could not ascertain the fate of Marian after the death of Robin. *His* death and burial are well known, and the inscription to his memory is still extant; but she was lost sight of from the time of his decease. How comes it, then, that Robert Davenport, in the seventeenth century, should be so well informed, as to know that Matilda ended her days in a nunnery by poison administered by order of King John, when there is *no tradition extant* of the time and manner of *her* decease? We have no other authority than this of Davenport's tragedy on the subject; and I should, therefore, be inclined to think that he was misinformed, and that the event recorded by him never happened. And as to its being *another* Matilda Fitzwalter, it is highly preposterous to imagine. Is it likely that at the same time there should be two barons of that name and title, each having a daughter named Matilda or Maud? Davenport calls his baron the *old* baron Fitzwalter; and the father of Maid Marian is described as the *old* baron; both must, therefore, have lived in the reign of Richard I., and also in that of

John till their death. Indeed, we have proof that the baron was alive in John's reign, because Richard I. having restored him at the same time that he pardoned Fitzooth, *John dispossessed them both* on his accession.

I think it, therefore, highly improbable that there should have been so remarkable a coincidence as *two* barons Fitzwalter, and *two* Matildas at the same time, and both the latter subject to the unwelcome addresses of John; consequently I cannot give credence, without *proofs*, to the incident in Davenport's play.—I am, Sir, respectfully yours,

'THE VEILED SPIRIT.'

May 17th, 1827.

PS.—Since writing the above, my friend F. C. N. suggests to me, that there was a baron Fitzwalter in John's reign, proprietor of Castle Baynard, whose daughter Matilda John saw at a tourney, and being smitten with her charms, proposed to her father for her as his mistress (precisely the events connected with Maid Marian); and, being refused, he attacked Castle Baynard, and ultimately destroyed it. However, for the reasons I have before stated, I am decidedly of opinion, that if such a baron was proprietor of Castle Baynard, it must have been the father of Maid Marian, as I cannot suppose there were *two*. I cannot precisely remember, nor have I anything to refer to, but I believe it was at a tourney somewhere that *Prince* John first saw *Maud*.

II

[*The Table Book*, May 24, 1827]

SIR,—A correspondent in your last number rather hastily asserts that there is no other authority than Davenport's Tragedy for the poisoning of Matilda by King John. It oddly happens, that in the same number appears an extract from a play of Heywood's, of an older date, in two parts, in which play the fact of such poisoning, as well as her identity with Maid Marian, are equally established. Michael Drayton, also, hath a legend confirmatory (so far as poetical authority can go) of the violent manner of her death. But neither he nor Davenport confounds her with Robin's mistress. Besides the named authorities, old Fuller,

I think, somewhere relates, as matter of chronicle-history, that old Fitzwater (he is called Fitzwater both in Heywood and in Davenport), being banished after his daughter's murder,—some years subsequently, King John, at a tournament in France, being delighted with the valiant bearing of a combatant in the lists, and enquiring his name, was told it was his old servant, the banished Fitzwater, who desired nothing more heartily than to be reconciled to his liege, and an affecting reconciliation followed. In the common collection, called *Robin Hood's Garland* (I have not seen Ritson's), no mention is made, if I remember, of the nobility of Marian. Is she not the daughter of old Squire Gamwell, of Gamwell Hall? Sorry that I cannot gratify the curiosity of your 'disembodied spirit' (who, as such, is, methinks, sufficiently 'veiled' from our notice) with more authentic testimonies, I rest,—Your humble Abstracter,

C. L.

III.—MRS. GILPIN'S RIDING TO EDMONTON

[Printed, with woodcut of Mrs. Gilpin (Mary Lamb) astride on a three-barred gate, in Wm. Hone's *The Table Book*, vol. ii, cols. 79–81, July—Aug., 1827. First collected in *The Life, Letters, and Writings of Charles Lamb*, ed. Percy Fitzgerald (Moxon), 1875.]

Then Mrs. Gilpin sweetly said
Unto her children three,
'I'll clamber o'er this style so high,
And you climb after me.'

But having climb'd unto the top,
She could no further go,
But sate, to every passer by
A spectacle and show.

Who said 'Your spouse and you this day
Both show your horsemanship,
And if you stay till he comes back,
Your horse will need no whip.'

The sketch, here engraved, (probably from the poet's friend Romney,) was found with the above three stanzas in the handwriting of Cowper, among the papers of the late Mrs. Unwin. It is to be regretted that no more was found of this little *Episode*, as it evidently was intended to be, to the 'Diverting History of Johnny Gilpin'. It is to be supposed that Mrs. Gilpin, in the interval between dinner

and tea, finding the time to hang upon her hands, during her husband's involuntary excursion, rambled out with the children into the fields at the back of the Bell, (as what could be more natural ?) and at one of those high aukward styles, for which Edmonton is so proverbially famed, the embarrassment represented, so mortifying to a substantial City Madam, might have happened; a predicament, which leaves her in a state, which is the very Antipodes to that of her too loco-motive husband; in fact she rides a restive horse.—Now I talk of Edmonton styles, I must speak a little about those of Enfield, its next neighbour, which are so ingeniously contrived—every rising bar to the top becoming more protuberant than the one under it—that it is impossible for any Christian climber to get over, without bruising his (or her) shins as many times as there are bars. These inhospitable invitations to a flayed skin are planted so thickly too, and are so troublesomely importunate at every little paddock here, that this, with more propriety than Thebes of old, might be entitled Hecatompolis; the Town of the Hundred Gates, or *styles*.

A Sojourner at Enfield.

July 16, 1827.

IV.—THE DEFEAT OF TIME;

or, A Tale of the Fairies

[Printed in *The Table Book*, vol. ii, cols. 335-40, 1827; signed ELIA. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

Titania, and her moonlight Elves, were assembled under the canopy of a huge oak, that served to shelter them from the moon's radiance, which, being now at her full noon, shot forth intolerable rays—intolerable, I mean, to the subtil texture of their little shadowy bodies—but dispensing an agreeable coolness to us grosser mortals. An air of discomfort sate upon the Queen, and upon her Courtiers. Their tiny friskings and gambols were forgot; and even Robin Goodfellow, for the first time in his little airy life, looked grave. For the Queen had had melancholy forebodings of late, founded upon an ancient Prophecy, laid up in the records of Fairy Land, that the date of Fairy existence should be *then* extinct, when men should cease

to believe in them. And she knew how that the race of the Nymphs, which were her predecessors, and had been the Guardians of the sacred floods, and of the silver fountains, and of the consecrated hills and woods, had utterly disappeared before the chilling touch of man's incredulity; and she sighed bitterly at the approaching fate of herself and of her subjects, which were dependent upon so fickle a lease, as the capricious and ever mutable faith of man. When, as if to realise her fears, a melancholy shape came gliding in, and *that* was—TIME, who with his intolerable scythe mows down Kings and Kingdoms; at whose dread approach the Fays huddled together, as a flock of timorous sheep, and the most courageous among them crept into acorn cups, not enduring the sight of that ancientest of Monarchs. Titania's first impulse was to wish the presence of her false Lord, King Oberon, who was far away, in the pursuit of a strange Beauty, a Fay of Indian Land—that with his good lance and sword, like a faithful knight and husband, he might defend her against TIME. But she soon checked that thought as vain, for what could the prowess of the mighty Oberon himself, albeit the stoutest Champion in Fairy Land, have availed against so huge a Giant, whose bald top touched the skies. So in the mildest tone she besought the Spectre, that in his mercy he would overlook, and pass by, her small subjects, as too diminutive and powerless to add any worthy trophy to his renown. And she besought him to employ his resistless strength against the ambitious Children of Men, and to lay waste their aspiring works, to tumble down their towers and turrets, and the Babels of their pride, fit objects of his devouring Scythe, but to spare her and her harmless race, who had no existence beyond a dream; frail objects of a creed; that lived but in the faith of the believer. And with her little arms, as well as she could, she grasped the stern knees of TIME, and waxing speechless with fear, she beckoned to her chief attendants, and Maids of Honour, to come forth from their hiding places, and to plead the Plea of the Fairies. And one of those small delicate creatures came forth at her bidding, clad all in white like a Chorister, and in a low melodious tone, not louder than the hum of a pretty bee—when it seems to be demurring whether it shall settle upon

this sweet flower or that, before it settles—set forth her humble Petition. 'We Fairies,' she said, 'are the most inoffensive race that live, and least deserving to perish. It is we that have the care of all sweet melodies, that no discords may offend the Sun, who is the great Soul of Music. We rouse the lark at morn; and the pretty Echoes, which respond to all the twittering quire, are of our making. Wherefore, great King of Years, as ever you have loved the music which is raining from a morning cloud, sent from the messenger of day, the Lark, as he mounts to Heaven's gate, beyond the ken of mortals; or if ever you have listened with a charmed ear to the Night Bird, that

> in the flowery spring,
> Amidst the leaves set, makes the thickets ring
> Of her sour sorrows, sweeten'd with her song:

spare our tender tribes; and we will muffle up the sheep-bell for thee, that thy pleasure take no interruption, whenever thou shalt listen unto Philomel.'

And TIME answered, that 'he had heard that song too long; and he was even wearied with that ancient strain, that recorded the wrongs of Tereus. But if she would know in what music TIME delighted, it was, when sleep and darkness lay upon crowded cities, to hark to the midnight chime, which is tolling from a hundred clocks, like the last knell over the soul of a dead world; or to the crush of the fall of some age-worn edifice, which is as the voice of himself when he disparteth kingdoms.'

A second female Fay took up the Plea, and said, 'We be the handmaids of the Spring, and tend upon the birth of all sweet buds; and the pastoral cowslips are our friends, and the pansies; and the violets, like nuns; and the quaking hare-bell is in our wardship; and the Hyacinth, once a fair youth, and dear to Phœbus.'

Then TIME made answer, in his wrath striking the harmless ground with his hurtful scythe, that 'they must not think that he was one that cared for flowers, except to see them wither, and to take her beauty from the rose.'

And a third Fairy took up the Plea, and said, 'We are kindly Things and it is we that sit at evening, and shake rich odours from sweet bowers upon discoursing lovers, that seem to each other to be their own sighs; and we

keep off the bat, and the owl, from their privacy, and the ill-boding whistler; and we flit in sweet dreams across the brains of infancy, and conjure up a smile upon its soft lips to beguile the careful mother, while its little soul is fled for a brief minute or two to sport with our youngest Fairies.'

Then SATURN (which is TIME) made answer, that 'they should not think that he delighted in tender Babes, that had devoured his own, till foolish Rhea cheated him with a Stone, which he swallowed, thinking it to be the infant Jupiter.' And thereat in token he disclosed to view his enormous tooth, in which appeared monstrous dints, left by that unnatural meal; and his great throat, that seemed capable of devouring up the earth and all its inhabitants at one meal. 'And for Lovers,' he continued, 'my delight is, with a hurrying hand to snatch them away from their love-meetings by stealth at nights, and to ravish away hours from them like minutes whilst they are together, and in absence to stand like a motionless statue, or their leaden Planet of mishap (whence I had my name), till I make their minutes seem ages.'

Next stood up a male fairy, clad all in green, like a forester, or one of Robin Hood's mates, and doffing his tiny cap, said, 'We are small foresters, that live in woods, training the young boughs in graceful intricacies, with blue snatches of the sky between; we frame all shady roofs and arches rude; and sometimes, when we are plying our tender hatchets, men say, that the tapping wood-pecker is nigh: and it is we that scoop the hollow cell of the squirrel; and carve quaint letters upon the rinds of trees, which in sylvan solitudes sweetly recall to the mind of the heat-oppressed swain, ere he lies down to slumber, the name of his Fair One, Dainty Aminta, Gentle Rosalind, or Chastest Laura, as it may happen.'

SATURN, nothing moved with this courteous address, bade him be gone, or 'if he would be a woodman, to go forth, and fell oak for the Fairies' coffins, which would forthwith be wanting. For himself, he took no delight in haunting the woods, till their golden plumage (the yellow leaves) were beginning to fall, and leave the brown black limbs bare, like Nature in her skeleton dress.'

Then stood up one of those gentle Fairies, that are good to Man, and blushed red as any rose, while he told a modest story of one of his own good deeds. 'It chanced upon a time,' he said, 'that while we were looking for cowslips in the meads, while yet the dew was hanging on the buds, like beads, we found a babe left in its swathing clothes—a little sorrowful deserted Thing; begot of Love, but begetting no love in others; guiltless of shame, but doomed to shame for its parents' offence in bringing it by indirect courses into the world. It was pity to see the abandoned little orphan, left to the world's care by an unnatural mother, how the cold dew kept wetting its childish coats; and its little hair, how it was bedabbled, that was like gossamer. Its pouting mouth, unknowing how to speak, lay half opened like a rose-lipt shell, and its cheek was softer than any peach, upon which the tears, for very roundness, could not long dwell, but fell off, in clearness like pearls, some on the grass, and some on his little hand, and some haply wandered to the little dimpled well under his mouth, which Love himself seemed to have planned out, but less for tears than for smilings. Pity it was, too, to see how the burning sun scorched its helpless limbs, for it lay without shade, or shelter, or mother's breast, for foul weather or fair. So having compassion on its sad plight, my fellows and I turned ourselves into grasshoppers, and swarmed about the babe, making such shrill cries, as that pretty little chirping creature makes in its mirth, till with our noise we attracted the attention of a passing rustic, a tender-hearted hind, who wondering at our small but loud concert, strayed aside curiously, and found the babe, where it lay on the remote grass, and taking it up, lapt it in his russet coat, and bore it to his cottage, where his wife kindly nurtured it, till it grew up a goodly personage. How this Babe prospered afterwards, let proud London tell. This was that famous Sir Thomas Gresham, who was the chiefest of her Merchants, the richest, the wisest. Witness his many goodly vessels on the Thames, freighted with costly merchandise, jewels from Ind, and pearls for courtly dames, and silks of Samarcand. And witness more than all, that stately Bourse (or Exchange) which he caused to be built, a mart for merchants from

East and West, whose graceful summit still bears, in token of the Fairies' favours, his chosen crest, the Grasshopper. And, like the Grasshopper, may it please you, great King, to suffer us also to live, partakers of the green earth ! '

The Fairy had scarce ended his Plea, when a shrill cry, not unlike the Grasshopper's, was heard. Poor Puck—or Robin Goodfellow, as he is sometimes called—had recovered a little from his first fright, and in one of his mad freaks had perched upon the beard of old TIME, which was flowing, ample, and majestic, and was amusing himself with plucking at a hair, which was indeed so massy, that it seemed to him that he was removing some huge beam of timber rather than a hair ; which TIME by some ill chance perceiving, snatched up the Impish Mischief with his great hand, and asked ' What it was ? '

' Alas ! ' quoth Puck, ' A little random Elf am I, born in one of Nature's sports, a very weed, created for the simple sweet enjoyment of myself, but for no other purpose, worth, or need, that ever I could learn. 'Tis I, that bob the Angler's idle cork, till the patient man is ready to breathe a curse. I steal the morsel from the Gossip's fork, or stop the sneezing Chanter in mid Psalm ; and when an infant has been born with hard or homely features, mothers say, that I changed the child at nurse ; but to fulfil any graver purpose I have not wit enough, and hardly the will. I am a pinch of lively dust to frisk upon the wind, a tear would make a puddle of me, and so I tickle myself with the lightest straw, and shun all griefs that might make me stagnant. This is my small philosophy.'

Then TIME, dropping him on the ground, as a thing too inconsiderable for his vengeance, grasped fast his mighty Scythe ; and now not Puck alone, but the whole State of Fairies had gone to inevitable wreck and destruction, had not a timely Apparition interposed, at whose boldness TIME was astounded, for he came not with the habit, or the forces, of a Deity, who alone might cope with TIME, but as a simple Mortal, clad as you might see a Forester, that hunts after wild coneys by the cold moonshine ; or a Stalker of stray deer, stealthy and bold. But by the golden lustre in his eye, and the passionate wanness in his cheek, and by the fair and ample space of his forehead,

which seemed a palace framed for the habitation of all glorious thoughts, he knew that this was his great Rival, who had power given him to rescue whatsoever victims TIME should clutch, and to cause them to live for ever in his immortal verse. And muttering the name of SHAKSPEARE, TIME spread his Roc-like wings, and fled the controuling presence. And the liberated Court of the Fairies, with Titania at their head, flocked around the gentle Ghost, giving him thanks, nodding to him, and doing him curtesies, who had crowned them henceforth with a permanent existence, to live in the minds of men, while verse shall have power to charm, or Midsummer moons shall brighten.

* * *

What particular endearments passed between the Fairies and their Poet, passes my pencil to delineate; but if you are curious to be informed, I must refer you, gentle reader, to the 'Plea of the Midsummer Fairies', a most agreeable Poem, lately put forth by my friend, Thomas Hood: of the first half of which the above is nothing but a meagre, and a harsh, prose-abstract. Farewell.

ELIA.

The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

[Written for Wm. Upcott. Printed with his permission by John Forster in *The New Monthly Magazine*, April, 1835. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

CHARLES LAMB born in the Inner Temple 10 Feb. 1775 educated in Christ's Hospital afterwards a clerk in the Accountants office East India House pensioned off from that service 1825 after 33 years service, is now a Gentleman at large, can remember few specialities in his life worth noting except that he once caught a swallow flying (*teste suâ manu*); below the middle stature, cast of face slightly Jewish, with no Judaic tinge in his complexional religion; stammers abominably and is therefore more apt to discharge his occasional conversation in a quaint aphorism or a poor quibble than in set and edifying speeches; has

consequently been libelled as a person always aiming at wit, which, as he told a dull fellow that charged him with it, is at least as good as aiming at dulness; a small eater but not drinker; confesses a partiality for the production of the juniper berry, was a fierce smoker of Tobacco, but may be resembled to a volcano burnt out, emitting only now and then a casual puff. Has been guilty of obtruding upon the Public a Tale in Prose, called Rosamund Gray, a Dramatic Sketch named John Woodvil, a Farewell Ode to Tobacco, with sundry other Poems and light prose matter, collected in Two slight crown Octavos and pompously christened his Works, tho' in fact they were his Recreations and his true works may be found on the shelves of Leadenhall Street, filling some hundred Folios. He is also the true Elia whose Essays are extant in a little volume published a year or two since; and rather better known from that name without a meaning, than from anything he has done or can hope to do in his own. He also was the first to draw the Public attention to the old English Dramatists in a work called 'Specimens of English Dramatic Writers who lived about the time of Shakspeare', published about 15 years since. In short all his merits and demerits to set forth would take to the end of Mr. Upcott's book and then not be told truly. He died [a]

18 much lamented.

Witness his hand, CHARLES LAMB.

10th Apr 1827.

SHAKSPEARE'S IMPROVERS

[Printed in *The Spectator*, Nov. 22, 1828. First identified by Mr. Alex. Ireland and collected by Canon Ainger, *Poems, Plays, and Essays of Charles Lamb*, 1884.]

To the Editor of the Spectator

SIR,—Partaking in your indignation at the sickly stuff interpolated by Tate in the genuine play of *King Lear*, I beg to lay before you certain kindred enormities that you may be less aware of, which that co-dilutor of Sternhold

[a] To any Body—Please to fill up these blanks.

and Hopkins,[a] with his compeers, were suffered—nay, encouraged—by an English public of a century and a half ago, to perpetrate upon the dramas of Shakspeare. I speak from imperfect recollection of one of these *new versions* which I have seen, namely, *Coriolanus*—by the same hand which touched up *King Lear ;* in which he, the said Nahum, not deeming his author's catastrophe enough striking, makes *Aufidius* (if my memory fail me not) violate the person of the wife, and mangle the body of the little son, of his Roman rival ! Shadwell, another improver, in *his* version of *Timon of Athens*, a copy of which ($167\frac{7}{8}$) is lying before me, omits the character of *Flavius*, the kind-hearted Steward—that fine exception to the air of general perfidy in the play, which would else be too oppressive to reader or spectator ; and substitutes for it a *kind female*, who is supposed to be attached to *Timon* to the last : thus making the moral of the piece to consist in showing—not the hollowness of friendships conciliated by a mere undistinguishing prodigality, but—the superiority of woman's love to the friendships of men. *Evandra* too has a rival in the affections of the noble Athenian. So impossible did these blockheads imagine it to be, to interest the feelings of an audience without an *intrigue*, that the misanthrope *Timon* must whine, and the daughterly *Cordelia* must whimper, their love affections, before they could hope to touch the gentle hearts in the boxes ! Had one of these gentry taken in hand to improve the fine Scriptural story of Joseph and his Brethren, we should have had a love passion introduced, to make the mere *fraternal interest* of the piece go down—an episode of the amours of Reuben, or Issachar, with the fair Mizraim of Egypt.—Thus *Evandra* closes the eyes of Shadwell's dying *Timon ;* who, it seems, has poisoned himself.

> *Evan.* Oh my dear Lord ! why do you stoop and bend
> Like flowers o'ercharged with dew, whose yielding stalks
> Cannot support them ?
> *Timon.* So now my weary pilgrimage on earth
> Is almost finish'd ! Now, my best Evandra,
> I charge thee by our loves, our mutual loves,

[a] New Version of the Singing Psalms, by Nahum Tate, and Nicholas Brady.

> Live, and live happy after me; and if
> A thought of Timon comes into thy mind,
> And brings a tear from thee—
> (*What then? why then*)·
> —let some diversion
> Banish it.—

And so, after some more drivel of the same stamp, the noble *Timon* dies. And was not this a dainty dish to set before an audience of the Duke's Theatre in the year 167$\frac{7}{8}$? Yet Betterton then acted *Timon*, and his wife *Evandra*.

I now come to the London acting edition of *Macbeth* of the same date, 1678 (played, if I remember, by the same players, at the same house); from which I made a few rough extracts, when I visited the British Museum for the sake of selecting from the 'Garrick Plays'. As I can scarcely expect to be believed upon my own word, as to what our ancestors at that time were willing to accept for Shakspeare, I refer the reader to that collection to verify my report. Who the improver was in this instance, we are left to guess, for the title-page leaves us to conjecture. Possibly the players, each one separately, contributed his new reading, which was silently adopted. Flesh and blood could not at this time of day submit to a thorough perusal of the thing; but, from a glance or two of casual inspection, I am enabled to lay before the reader a few flowers. In one of the lyric parts, *Hecate* is made to say—

> ————on a corner of the moon
> A drop my *spectacles* have found.
> I'll catch it.

Hecate, the solemn president of classic enchantments, thence adopted into the romantic—the tri-form Hecate—wearing spectacles to assist old sight!—(No. 4 or No. 5, as the opticians class them, is not said)—one may as well fancy Cerberus in a bran new collar, or the 'dreaded name of Demogorgon' in jack-boots. Among the 'ingredients of the cauldron', is enumerated, not a tiger's, but—what reader?—

> ————a *Dutchman's* chawdron!

We were about that time engaged in a war with Holland.—Again, *Macduff* being about to journey across the heath—

the 'blasted heath'—answers his lady, who courteously demands of him, 'Are you a-foot?'—

> Knowing the way to be both short and easy,
> And that the *chariot* did attend me here,
> I have adventured——

From which we may infer, that the Thane of Fife lived as a nobleman ought to do, and—kept a carriage. Again, the same nobleman, on the morning after *Duncan's* murder, says:—'Rising this morning early, I went to look out of my window. I could scarce see further than my breath.' And indeed the original author informs us, that it had been a 'rough night'; so that the improver does not wander far from his text. The exquisite familiarity of this prose patch was doubtlessly intended by the improver to break the tiresome monotony of Shakspeare's blank verse. In conclusion, *Lady Macbeth* is brought in *repentant*, and counselling her husband to give up the crown for conscience sake!—*Item*, she sees a ghost, which is all the time invisible to him. Such was the *Macbeth* which Betterton acted, and a contemporary audience took on trust for Shakspeare's.

C. L.

SATURDAY NIGHT

[Printed, to accompany David Wilkie's picture, 'Saturday Night', in *The Gem* annual for 1830. First collected in *The Complete Correspondence*, &c., Moxon, 1868–1870.]

THERE is a Saturday Night—I speak not to the admirers of Burns—erotically or theologically considered; HIS of the 'Cotter's' may be a very charming picture, granting it to be but half true. Nor speak I now of the Saturday Night at Sea, which Dibdin hath dressed up with a gusto more poignant to the mere nautical palate of un-Calvanized South Britons. Nor that it is marketing night with the pretty tripping Servant-maids all over London, who, with judicious and economic eye, select the white and well-blown fillet, that the blue-aproned contunder of the calf can safely recommend as 'prime veal', and which they are to be sure not to over-brown on the morrow. Nor speak I of the hard-handed Artisan, who on this night receives the pittance which is to furnish the neat Sabbatical dinner

—not always reserved with Judaical rigor for that laudable purpose, but broken in upon, perchance, by inviting pot of ale, satisfactory to the present orifice. These are alleviatory, care-consoling. But the Hebdomadal Finale which I contemplate hath neither comfort nor alleviation in it; I pronounce it, from memory, altogether punitive, and to be abhorred. It is—Saturday Night to the School-boy!

Cleanliness, saith some sage man, is next to Godliness. It may be; but how it came to sit so very near, is the marvel. Methinks some of the more human virtues might have put in for a place before it. Justice—Humanity—Temperance—are positive qualities; the courtesies and little civil offices of life, had I been Master of the Ceremonies to that Court, should have sate above the salt in preference to a mere negation. I confess there is something wonderfully refreshing, in warm countries, in the act of ablution. Those Mahometan washings—how cool to the imagination! but in all these superstitions, the action itself, if not the duty, is voluntary. But to be washed perforce; to have a detestable flannel rag soaked in hot water, and redolent of the very coarsest coarse soap, ingrained with hard beads for torment, thrust into your mouth, eyes, nostrils—positively Burking you, under pretence of cleansing—substituting soap for dirt, the worst dirt of the two—making your poor red eyes smart all night, that they might look out brighter on the Sabbath morn, for their clearness was the effect of pain more than cleanliness.—Could this be true religion?

The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. I am always disposed to add, so are those of Grandmothers. *Mine*—the Print has made her look rather too young—had never-failing pretexts of tormenting children for their good. I was a chit then; and I well remember when a fly had got into a corner of my eye, and I was complaining of it to her, the old Lady deliberately pounded two ounces or more of the finest loaf sugar that could be got, and making me hold open the eye as wide as I could—all innocent of her purpose—she blew from delicate white paper, with a full breath, the whole saccharine contents into the part afflicted, saying, 'There, now the fly is out.' 'Twas most true—a legion of blue-bottles, with the prince of flies at their

head, must have dislodged with the torrent and deluge of tears which followed. I kept my own counsel, and my fly in my eye when I had got one, in future, without troubling her dulcet applications for the remedy. Then her medicine-case was a perfect magazine of tortures for infants. She seemed to have no notion of the comparatively tender drenches which young internals require—her potions were any thing but milk for babes. Then her sewing up of a cut finger—pricking a whitloe before it was ripe, because she could not see well,—with the aggravation of the pitying tone she did it in.

But of all her nostrums—rest her soul—nothing came up to the Saturday Night's flannel—that rude fragment of a Witney blanket—Wales spins none so coarse—thrust into the corners of a weak child's eye with soap that might have absterged an Ethiop, whitened the hands of Duncan's She-murderer, and scowered away Original Sin itself. A faint image of my penance you see in the Print—but the Artist has sunk the flannel—the Age, I suppose, is too nice to bear it : and he has faintly shadowed the expostulatory suspension of the razor-strap in the hand of my Grandfather, when my pains and clamours had waxed intolerable. Peace to the Shades of them both ! and if their well-meaning souls had need of cleansing when they quitted earth, may the process of it have been milder than that of my old Purgatorial Saturday Night's path to the Sabbatical rest of the morrow !

NEPOS.

ESTIMATE OF DE FOE'S SECONDARY NOVELS

[Composed for and printed in Walter Wilson's *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel de Foe*, 1830, vol. iii, p. 636. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

IT has happened not seldom that one work of some author has so transcendantly surpassed in execution the rest of his compositions, that the world has agreed to pass a sentence of dismissal upon the latter, and to consign them to total neglect and oblivion. It has done wisely in this, not to suffer the contemplation of excellencies of

a lower standard to abate, or stand in the way of, the pleasure it has agreed to receive from the master-piece.

Again it has happened, that from no inferior merit of execution in the rest, but from superior good fortune in the choice of its subject, some single work shall have been suffered to eclipse, and cast into shade the deserts of its less fortunate brethren. This has been done with more or less injustice in the case of the popular allegory of Bunyan, in which the beautiful and scriptural image of a pilgrim or wayfarer (we are all such upon earth), addressing itself intelligibly and feelingly to the bosoms of all, has silenced, and made almost to be forgotten, the more awful and scarcely less tender beauties of the 'Holy War made by Shaddai upon Diabolus', of the same author; a romance less happy in its subject, but surely well worthy of a secondary immortality. But in no instance has this excluding partiality been exerted with more unfairness than against what may be termed the secondary novels or romances of De Foe.

While all ages and descriptions of people hang delighted over the 'Adventures of Robinson Crusoe', and shall continue to do so we trust while the world lasts, how few comparatively will bear to be told, that there exist other fictitious narratives by the same writer—four of them at least of no inferior interest, except what results from a less felicitous choice of situation. Roxana—Singleton—Moll Flanders—Colonel Jack—are all genuine offspring of the same father. They bear the veritable impress of De Foe. An unpractised midwife that would not swear to the nose, lip, forehead, and eye, of every one of them! They are in their way as full of incident, and some of them every bit as romantic; only they want the uninhabited Island, and the charm, that has bewitched the world, of the striking solitary situation.

But are there no solitudes out of the cave and the desert? or cannot the heart in the midst of crowds feel frightfully alone? Singleton, on the world of waters, prowling about with pirates less merciful than the creatures of any howling wilderness; is he not alone, with the faces of men about him, but without a guide that can conduct him through the mists of educational and habitual ignorance; or

a fellow-heart that can interpret to him the new-born yearnings and aspirations of unpractised penitence? Or when the boy Colonel Jack, in the loneliness of the heart (the worst solitude), goes to hide his ill-purchased treasure in the hollow tree by night, and miraculously loses, and miraculously finds it again—whom hath he there to sympathise with him? or of what sort are his associates?

The narrative manner of De Foe has a naturalness about it, beyond that of any other novel or romance writer. His fictions have all the air of true stories. It is impossible to believe, while you are reading them, that a real person is not narrating to you every where nothing but what really happened to himself. To this, the extreme *homeliness* of their style mainly contributes. We use the word in its best and heartiest sense—that which comes *home* to the reader. The narrators everywhere are chosen from low life, or have had their origin in it; therefore they tell their own tales, (Mr. Coleridge has anticipated us in this remark,) as persons in their degree are observed to do, with infinite repetition, and an overacted exactness, lest the hearer should not have minded, or have forgotten, some things that had been told before. Hence the emphatic sentences marked in the good old (but deserted) Italic type; and hence, too, the frequent interposition of the reminding old colloquial parenthesis, 'I say'—'mind'—and the like, when the story-teller repeats what, to a practised reader, might appear to have been sufficiently insisted upon before: which made an ingenious critic observe, that his works, in this kind, were excellent reading for the kitchen. And, in truth, the heroes and heroines of De Foe, can never again hope to be popular with a much higher class of readers, than that of the servant-maid or the sailor. Crusoe keeps its rank only by tough prescription; Singleton, the pirate—Colonel Jack, the thief—Moll Flanders, both thief and harlot—Roxana, harlot and something worse—would be startling ingredients in the bill of fare of modern literary delicacies. But, then, what pirates, what thieves, and what harlots, are *the thief*, *the harlot*, and *the pirate* of De Foe? We would not hesitate to say, that in no other book of fiction, where the lives of such characters are described, is guilt and delinquency

made less seductive, or the suffering made more closely to follow the commission, or the penitence more earnest or more bleeding, or the intervening flashes of religious visitation, upon the rude and uninstructed soul, more meltingly and fearfully painted. They, in this, come near to the tenderness of Bunyan; while the livelier pictures and incidents in them, as in Hogarth or in Fielding, tend to diminish that 'fastidiousness to the concerns and pursuits of common life, which an unrestrained passion for the ideal and the sentimental is in danger of producing.' [1]

CLARENCE SONGS

[Printed in *The Spectator*, July 24, 1830. First collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

To the Editor of The Spectator

Sir,—You have a question in your paper, what songs, and whether any of any value, were written upon Prince William, our present Sovereign. Can it have escaped you, that the very popular song and tune of 'Sweet lass of Richmond Hill' had reference to a supposed partiality of that Prince for a lass of Richmond? I have heard who she was, but now forget. I think it was a damsel of quality. I remember, when I was a schoolboy at Christ's Hospital, about eight-and-forty years since, having had my hearing stunned with the burthen (which alone I retain) of some ballad in praise and augury of the Princely Midshipman:—

> He's royal, he's noble, he's chosen by *me*,[a]
> Britain's Isle to protect, and reign Lord of the Sea!

and my old ears yet ring with it.

Allusions to the same personage were at that time rife in innumerable ballads, under the notion of a *sweet William;* but the ballads are obliterated. The song of 'Sweet William Taylor, walking with his lady gay'—from the identity of names, I suppose—usually followed the Neptunian song. The late Tom Sheridan bears away the credit

[a] It is Neptune who predicts this.

[1] *For another criticism by Lamb on De Foe, extracted by Wilson from a letter of* 1822, *see Editor's Notes.*

of this. But was it possible he could have been the author of it in 1782 or 1783? Perhaps he made it his own by communicating a deeper tinge of vulgarity to it, exchanging 'William' for 'Billy'. I think the rogue snugged it in as his own, hoping it was a forgotten ditty.

C. L.

CLARENCE SONGS.—No. II

Sir,—A friend has just reminded me of a ballad made on occasion of some shipboard scrape into which our Royal Midshipman had fallen; in which, with a *romantic licence*, the rank of the young sailor is supposed to have been unknown, and a corporal infliction about to have been put into execution. This is all he can recover of it. He was

——order'd to undress, Sir!
But very soon they did espy
The star upon his breast, Sir:
And on their knees they soon did fall,
And all for mercy soon did call.

The burden was 'Long live Duke William', or something to that effect. So you see, his Majesty has enjoyed his laureats by anticipation.

C. L.

I know the town swarmed with these Clarence songs in the hey-day of his young popularity. Where are they?

RECOLLECTIONS OF A LATE ROYAL ACADEMICIAN

[Printed under the title, *Peter's Net. 'All is fish that comes to my net.' No.* 1.—*Recollections of a Late Royal Academician,* in *The Englishman's Magazine,* vol. ii, no. i, Sept., 1831. First collected in *The Complete Correspondence,* &c., Moxon, 1868-1870.]

What Apelles was to the *Grecian Alexander*, the same to the *Russian* was the late G—— D——. None but Apelles might attempt the lineaments of the world's conqueror; none but our Academician could have done justice to the lines of the Czar, and his courtiers. There they hang, the labour of ten plodding years, in an endless gallery, erected for the nonce, in the heart of Imperial Petersburgh—

eternal monuments of barbarian taste submitting to half-civilized cunning—four hundred fierce Half-Lengths, all male, and all military; like the pit in a French theatre, or the characters in Timon as it was last acted, with never a woman among them. Chaste sitters to Vandyke, models of grace and womanhood; and thou, Dame Venetia Digby, fairest among thy fair compeers at Windsor, hide your pure pale cheeks, and cool English beauties, before this suffocating horde of Scythian riflers, this male chaos! Your cold oaken frames shall wane before the gorgeous buildings,

> With Tartar faces thronged, and horrent uniforms.

One emperor contended for the monopoly of the *ancient;* two were competitors at once for the pencil of the *modern Apelles.* The Russian carried it against the Haytian by a single length. And if fate, as it was at one time nearly arranged, had wafted D. to the shores of Hayti—with the same complacency in his art, with which he persisted in daubing in, day after day, his frozen Muscovites, he would have sate down for life to smutch in upon canvas the faces of blubber-lipped sultanas, or the whole male retinue of the dingy court of Christophe. For in truth a choice of subjects was the least of D.'s care. A Goddess from Cnidus, or from the Caffre coast, was equal to him; Lot, or Lot's wife; the charming widow H., or her late husband.

My acquaintance with D. was in the outset of his art, when the graving tools, rather than the pencil, administered to his humble wants. Those implements, as is well known, are not the most favourable to the cultivation of that virtue, which is esteemed next to godliness. He might 'wash his hands in innocency', and so metaphorically 'approach an altar'; but his material puds were any thing but fit to be carried to church. By an ingrained economy in soap—if it was not for pictorial effect rather—he would wash (on Sundays) the inner oval, or portrait, as it may be termed, of his countenance, leaving the unwashed temples to form a natural black frame round a picture, in which a dead white was the predominant colour. This, with the addition of green spectacles, made necessary by the

impairment, which his graving labours by day and night (for he was ordinarily at them for sixteen hours out of the twenty-four) had brought upon his visual faculties, gave him a singular appearance, when he took the air abroad; in so much, that I have seen a crowd of young men and boys following him along Oxford-street with admiration, not without shouts; even as the Youth of Rome, we read in Vasari, followed the steps of Raphael with acclamations for his genius, and for his beauty, when he proceeded from his work-shop to chat with Cardinals and Popes at the Vatican.

The family of D. were not at this time in affluent circumstances. His father, a clever artist, had outlived the style of art, in which he excelled most of his contemporaries. He, with the father of the celebrated Morland, worked for the shop of Carrington and Bowles, which exists still for the poorer sort of caricatures, on the North side of St. Paul's Church Yard. They did clever things in colours. At an inn in Reading a screen is still preserved, full of their labours; but the separate portions of either artist are now undistinguishable. I remember a Mother teaching her Child to read (B. Barton has a copy of it); a Laundress washing; a young Quaker, a beautiful subject. But the flower of their forgotten productions hangs still at a public house on the left hand, as thou arrivest, Reader, from the now Highgate archway, at the foot of the descent where Crouch End begins, on thy way to green Hornsey. Turn in, and look at it, for the sight is well worth a cup of excusatory cyder. In the parlour to the right you will find it—an antiquated subject—a Damsel sitting at her breakfast table in a gown of the flowered chintz of our grandmothers, with a tea-service before her of the *same pattern*. The effect is most delicate. Why have these harmonies—these *agrémens*—no place in the works of modern art?

With such niceties in his calling D. did not much trouble his head, but, after an ineffectual experiment to reconcile his eye-sight with his occupation, boldly quitted it, and dashed into the beaten road of common-place portraiture in oil. The Hoppners, and the Lawrences, were his Vandykes, and his Velasquezes; and if he could make any thing like

them, he insured himself immortality. With such guides he struggled on through laborious nights and days, till he reached the eminence he aimed at—of mediocrity. Having gained that summit, he sate down contented. If the features were but cognoscible, no matter whether the flesh resembled flesh, or oilskin. For the thousand tints—the grains—which in life diversify the nose, the chin, the cheek—which a Reynolds can but coarsely counterfeit—he cared nothing at all about them. He left such scrupulosities to opticians and anatomists. If the features were but there, the character of course could not be far off. A lucky hit which he made in painting the *dress* of a very dressy lady—Mrs. W—e—, whose handsome countenance also, and tall elegance of shape, were too palpable entirely to escape under any masque of oil, with which even D. could overlay them—brought to him, at once, an influx of sitters, which almost rivalled the importunate calls upon Sir Thomas. A portrait, he *did* soon after, of the Princess Charlotte, clenched his fame. He proceeded Academician. At that memorable conjuncture of time it pleased the Allied Sovereigns to visit England.

I called upon D. to congratulate him upon a crisis so doubly eventful. His pleasant housekeeper seemed embarrassed; owned that her master was alone. But could he be spoken with? With some importunity I prevailed upon her to usher me up into his painting-room. It was in Newman-street. At his easel stood D., with an immense spread of canvas before him, and by his side a—live Goose. I enquired into this extraordinary combination. Under the rose he informed me, that he had undertaken to paint a transparency for Vauxhall, against an expected visit of the Allied Sovereigns to that place. I smiled at an engagement so derogatory to his new-born honours; but a contempt of small gains was never one of D.'s foibles. My eyes beheld crude forms of warriors, kings, rising under his brush upon this interminable stretch of cloth. The Wolga, the Don, and the Nieper, were there, or their representative River Gods; and Father Thames clubbed urns with the Vistula. Glory with her dazzling Eagle was not absent, nor Fame, nor Victory. The shade of Rubens might have evoked the mighty allegories. But

what was the Goose? He was evidently *sitting* for a something.

D. at last informed me, that having fixed upon a group of rivers, he could not introduce the Royal Thames without his *swans*. That he had enquired the price of a live swan, and it being more than he was prepared to give for it, he had bargained with the poulterer for the *next thing to it;* adding significantly, that it would do to roast, after it had served its turn to paint swans by. *Reader, this is a true story.*

So entirely devoid of imagination, or any feeling for his high art, was this *Painter*, that for the few historical pictures he attempted, any sitter might sit for any character. He took once for a subject *The Infant Hercules.* Did he chuse for a model some robust antique? No. He did not even pilfer from Sir Joshua, who was nearer to his own size. But from a *show* he hired to sit to him a child in years indeed (though no Infant,) but in fact a precocious *Man*, or human portent, that was disgustingly exhibiting at that period; a thing to be strangled. From this he formed *his* Infant Hercules. In a scriptural flight he next attempted a Samson in the lap of Dalilah. A Dalilah of some sort was procurable for love or money, but who should stand for the Jewish Hercules? He hired a tolerably stout porter, with a thickish head of hair, curling in yellowish locks, but lithe—much like a wig. And these were the robust strengths of Samson.

I once was a witness to a *family scene* in his painting closet, which I had entered rather abruptly, and but for his encouragement, should as hastily have retreated. He stood with displeased looks eyeing a female relative—whom I had known under happier auspices—that was kneeling at his feet with a baby in her arms, with her eyes uplifted and suppliant. Though I could have previously sworn to the virtue of Miss ——, yet casual slips have been known. There are such things as families disgraced, where least you would have expected it. The child *might* be ——; I had heard of no wedding—I was the last person to pry into family secrets—when D. relieved my uneasy cogitations by explaining, that the innocent, good-humoured creature before me (such as she ever was, and is now that

she is married) with a baby borrowed from the public house, was acting Andromache to *his* Ulysses, for the purpose of transferring upon canvas a tender situation from the Troades of Seneca.

On a subsequent occasion I knocked at D.'s door. I had chanced to have been in a dreamy humour previously. I am not one that often poetises, but I had been musing—coxcombically enough in the heart of Newman-street, Oxford Road—upon Pindus, and the Aonian Maids. The Lover of Daphne was in my mind—when, answering to my summons, the door opened, and there stood before me, laurel-crowned, the God himself, unshorn Apollo. I was beginning to mutter apologies to the Celestial Presence—when on the thumb of the right hand of the Delian (his left held the harp) I spied a pallet, such as painters carry, which immediately reconciled me to the whimsical transformation of my old acquaintance—with his own face, certainly any other than Grecianesque—into a temporary image of the oracle-giver of Delphos. To have impersonated the Ithacan was little ; he had been just sitting for a God. —It would be no incurious enquiry to ascertain what the *minimum* of the faculty of imagination, ever supposed essential to painters along with poets, is, that, in these days of complaints of want of patronage towards the fine arts, suffices to dub a man a R——l A——n.

Not only had D. no imagination to guide him in the treatment of such subjects, but he had no relish for high art in the productions of the great masters. He turned away from them as from something foreign and irrelative to him, and his calling. He knew he had neither part nor portion in them. Cozen him into the Stafford or the Angerstein Gallery, he involuntarily turned away from the Baths of Diana—the Four Ages of Guercino—the Lazarus of Piombo—to some petty piece of *modern art* that had been inconsistently thrust into the collection through favour. On that he would dwell and pore, blind as the dead to the delicacies that surrounded him. There he might learn something. There he might pilfer a little. There was no grappling with Titian, or Angelo.

The narrowness of his domestic habits to the very last, was the consequence of his hard bringing up, and un-

expected emergence into opulence. While rolling up to the ears in Russian rubles, a penny was still in his eyes the same important thing, which it had with some reason seemed to be, when a few shillings were his daily earnings. When he visited England a short time before his death, he reminded an artist of a commission, which he had executed for him in Russia, the package of which was 'still unpaid'. At this time he was not unreasonably supposed to have realized a sum little short of half a million sterling. What became of it was never known; what gulf, or what Arctic *vorago*, sucked it in, his acquaintance in those parts have better means of guessing, than his countrymen. It is certain that few of the latter were any thing the better for it.

It was before he expatriated himself, but subsequently to his acquisition of pictorial honours in this country, that he brought home two of his brother Academicians to dine with him. He had given no orders extraordinary to his housekeeper. He trusted, as he always did, to her providing. She was a shrewd lass, and knew, as we say, a bit of her master's mind.

It had happened that on the day before, D. passing near Clare Market by one of those open shambles, where tripe and cow-heel are exposed for sale, his eye was arrested by the sight of some tempting flesh *rolled up*. It is a part of the intestines of some animal, which my olfactory sensibilities never permitted me to stay long enough to enquire the name of. D. marked the curious involutions of the unacquainted luxury; the harmony of its colours—a *sable vert*—pleased his eye; and, warmed with the prospect of a new flavour, for a few farthings he bore it off in triumph to his housekeeper. It so happened that his day's dinner was provided, so the cooking of the novelty was for that time necessarily suspended.

Next day came. The hour of dinner approached. His visitors, with no very romantic anticipations, expected a plain meal at least; they were prepared for no new dainties; when, to the astonishment of them, and almost of D. himself, the purchase of the preceding day was served up piping hot—the cook declaring, that she did not know well what it was, for 'her master always marketed'. His

guests were not so happy in their ignorance. They kept dogs.

I will do D. the justice to say, that on such occasions he took what happened in the best humour possible. He had no *false modesty*—though I have generally observed, that persons, who are quite deficient in that *mauvais*[*e*] *honte*, are seldom over-troubled with the quality itself, of which it is the counterfeit.

By what arts, with *his* pretensions, D. contrived to wriggle himself into a seat in the Academy, I am not acquainted enough with the intrigues of that body (more involved than those of an Italian conclave) to pronounce. It is certain, that neither for love to him, nor out of any respect to his talents, did they elect him. Individually he was obnoxious to them all. I have heard that, in his passion for attaining this object, he went so far as to go down upon his knees to some of the members, whom he thought least favourable, and beg their suffrage with many tears.

But *death*, which extends the measure of a man's stature to appearance ; and *wealth*, which men worship in life and death, which makes giants of punies, and embalms insignificance ; called around the exequies of this pigmy Painter the rank, the riches, the fashion of the world. By Academic hands his pall was borne ; by the carriages of nobles of the land, and of ambassadors from foreign powers, his bier was followed ; and St. Paul's (O worthy casket for the shrine of such a Zeuxis) now holds—ALL THAT WAS MORTAL OF G. D.

THE LATIN POEMS OF VINCENT BOURNE

[Printed in *The Englishman's Magazine*, Sept., 1831. Identified by Mr. J. Dykes Campbell (*Athenæum*, Aug. 3, 1889), and first collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

A COMPLETE translation of these poems is a desideratum in our literature. Cowper has done *one* at least, out of the four which he has given us, with a felicity almost unapproachable. Few of our readers can be ignorant of the delightful lines beginning with :—

There is a bird, which by its coat——

A recent writer has lately added nine more to the number; we wish he would proceed with the remainder, for of all modern Latinity, that of Vincent Bourne is the most to our taste. He is 'so Latin', and yet 'so English' all the while. In diction worthy of the Augustan age, he presents us with no images that are not familiar to his countrymen. His topics are even closelier drawn; they are not so properly English, as *Londonish*. From the streets, and from the alleys, of his beloved metropolis he culled his objects, which he has invested with an Hogarthian richness of colouring. No town picture by that artist can go beyond his BALLAD-SINGERS; Gay's TRIVIA alone, in verse, comes up to the life and humour of it.

Quâ septem vicos conterminat una columna,
Consistunt nymphae Sirenum ex agmine binae;
Stramineum capiti tegimen, collumque per omne
Ingentes electri orbes: utrique pependit
Crustato vestis coeno, limoque rigescens
Crure usque à medio calcem defluxit ad imum.
Exiguam secum pendentem ex ubere natam
Altera; venales dextrâ tulit altera chartas.
His vix dispositis, pueri innuptaeque puellae
Accurrunt: sutor primus, cui lorea vitta
Impediit crines, humili, quae proxima stabat,
Proruit è cellâ, chartas, si forte placerent,
Empturus; namque ille etiam se carmine multo
Oblectat, longos solus quo rite labores
Diminuit, fallitque hybernae taedia noctis.
Collecti murmur sensim increbrescere vulgi
Audit; et excurrit nudis ancilla lacertis.
Incudem follesque et opus fabrile relinquens,
Se densae immiscet plebi niger ora Pyracmon.
It juxta, depressum ingens cui mantica tergum
Incurvat, tardo passu; simul ille coronam
Aspectat vulgi, spe carminis arrigit aures;
Statque morae patiens, humeris nec pondera sentit.
Sic ubi Tartareum Regem Rhodopeïus Orpheus
Threiciis studuit fidibus mulcere, laboris
Immemor, Æolides stupuit modulamina plectri,
Nec sensit funesti onera incumbentia saxi.
Saepe interventus rhedae crepitantis, ab illo
Vicorum, aut illo, stipantem hinc inde catervam
Dividit; at rursus coëunt, ubi transiit illa,
Ut coëunt rursus, puppis quas dividit, undae.
Canticulae interea narraverat argumentum
Altera Sirenum, infidi perjuria nautae,
Deceptamque dolo nympham; tum flebile carmen

Flebilibus movit numeris, quos altera versu
Alterno excepit: patulis stant rictibus omnes:
Dextram ille acclinat, laevam ille attentiùs aurem,
Promissum carmen captare paratus hiatu.
Longa referre mora est, animum quâ vicerit arte
Virgineum juvenis. Jam poscunt undique chartas
Protensae emptorum dextrae, quas illa vel illa
Distribuit, cantatque simul: neque ferreus iste
Est usquam auditor, dulcis cui lene camoena
Non adhibet tormentum, et furtivum elicit assem.
Stat medios inter baculoque innititur Irus;
Nec tamen hic loculo parcit, sed prodigus aeris
Emptor adest, solvit pretium, carmenque requirit.
Fors juxtà adstabat vetula iracundior aequo;
Quae loculo ex imo invitum, longumque latentem
Depromens vix tandem obolum, Cedo, foemina, chartam,
Inquit; ut aeternum monumentum in pariete figam,
Cum Laribus mansurum ipsis, quàm credula nymphis
Pectora sint; fraudis quàm plena, et perfida Nautis.

Where seven fair Streets to one tall Column [a] draw,
Two Nymphs have ta'en their stand, in hats of straw;
Their yellower necks huge beads of amber grace,
And by their trade they're of the Sirens' race.
With cloak loose-pinn'd on each, that has been red,
But long with dust and dirt discoloured
Belies its hue; in mud behind, before,
From heel to middle leg becrusted o'er.
One a small infant at the breast does bear;
And one in her right hand her tuneful ware,
Which she would vend. Their station scarce is taken,
When youths and maids flock round. His stall forsaken,
Forth comes a Son of Crispin, leathern-capt,
Prepared to buy a ballad, if one apt
To move his fancy offers. Crispin's sons
Have, from uncounted time, with ale and buns
Cherish'd the gift of *Song*, which sorrow quells;
And, working single in their low-rooft cells,
Oft cheat the tedium of a winter's night
With anthems warbled in the Muses' spight.
Who now hath caught the alarm? The Servant Maid
Hath heard a buzz at distance; and, afraid
To miss a note, with elbows red comes out.
Leaving his forge to cool, Pyracmon stout
Thrusts in his unwash'd visage. *He* stands by,
Who the hard trade of Porterage does ply
With stooping shoulders. What cares he? he sees
The assembled ring, nor heeds his tottering knees,
But pricks his ears up with the hopes of song.
So, while the Bard of Rhodope his wrong

[a] Seven Dials.

Bewail'd to Proserpine on Thracian strings,
The tasks of gloomy Orcus lost their stings,
And stone-vext Sysiphus forgets his load.
Hither and thither from the sevenfold road
Some cart or wagon crosses, which divides
The close-wedged audience; but, as when the tides
To ploughing ships give way, the ship being past,
They re-unite, so these unite as fast.
The older Songstress hitherto has spent
Her elocution in the argument
Of their great Song in prose; to wit, the woes
Which Maiden true to faithless Sailor owes—
Ah '*Wandering He!*'—which now in loftier verse
Pathetic they alternately rehearse.
All gaping wait the event. This Critic opes
His right ear to the strain. The other hopes
To catch it better with his left. Long trade
It were to tell, how the deluded Maid
A victim fell. And now right greedily
All hands are stretching forth the songs to buy,
That are so tragical; which She, and She,
Deals out, and *sings the while;* nor can there be
A breast so obdurate here, that will hold back
His contribution from the gentle rack
Of Music's pleasing torture. Irus' self,
The staff-propt Beggar, his thin-gotten pelf
Brings out from pouch, where squalid farthings rest,
And boldly claims his ballad with the rest.
An old Dame only lingers. To her purse
The penny sticks. At length, with harmless curse,
'Give me,' she cries—'I'll paste it on my wall,
While the wall lasts, to show what ills befal
Fond hearts, seduced from Innocency's way;
How Maidens fall, and Mariners betray.'

In the same style of familiar painting, and replete with the same images of town life, picturesque as it was comparatively in the days of Gay, and of Hogarth, are the various Poematia—to the 'Bellman'—'Billingsgate'—the 'Law Courts'—the 'Licensed Victualler'—the 'Quack'—the 'Quaker's Meeting'—*cum multis aliis*—of this most classical of Cockney Poets. In a different strain is the following piece of tenderness:—

IN STATUAM SEPULCHRALEM INFANTIS DORMIENTIS

Infans venuste, qui sacros dulces agens
In hoc sopores marmore,
Placidissimâ quiete compôstus jaces,
Et inscius culpae et metûs,

Somno fruaris, docta quem dedit manus
Sculptoris; et somno simul,
Quem nescit artifex vel Ars effingere,
Fruaris innocentiae.

Beautiful Infant, who dost keep
Thy posture here, and sleep'st a marble sleep,
May the repose unbroken be,
Which the fine Artist's hand hath lent to thee!
While thou enjoy'st along with it
That which no Art or Craft could ever hit,
Or counterfeit to moral sense,
The Heav'n-infused sleep of Innocence.

We have selected these two versions from a little volume lately published by Mr. Lamb, to which he has strangely given the misnomer of 'Album Verses'.

Album Verses! why, in the whole collection there are not twenty pages out of one hundred and fifty (and cast the acrostics in, to swell the amount) that have the smallest title to come under this denomination. There is a Tragic Drama, filling up more than a third of the book. The rest is composed of—Translations from V. Bourne, nine in number—just so many Verses, and no more, expressly written for Albums—and the rest might have been written any where. But Mr. L. will be wiser another time, than to stand Godfather to his own poetry. A sensible Publisher is always the best names-man on these occasions.

But if to write in Albums be a sin, Lord help Wordsworth—Coleridge—Southey—Sir Walter himself—who have not been always able to resist the solicitations of the fair owners of these modern nuisances. Southey has owned to some score, and Mr. L.'s offences in this kind, we have said, do not exceed the number of the Muses. This may be said even of them, that they are not vague verses—to the Moon, or to the Nightingale—that will fit any place—but strictly appropriate to the person that they were intended to gratify; or to the species of chronicle which they were destined to be recorded in. The Verses to a 'Clergyman's Lady'—to the 'Wife of a learned Serjeant'—to a 'Young Quaker'—could have appeared only in an Album, and only in that particular person's Album they were composed for.

We are no friend to Albums. We early set our face

against them in a short copy of verses, which we publish only for our own justification. To the question :—

WHAT IS AN ALBUM ?

'Tis a Book kept by modern young Ladies for show,
Of which their plain Grandmothers nothing did know;
A Medley of Scraps, half verse, and half prose,
And some things not very like either, God knows;
Where wise folk and simple alike do combine,
And you write *your* nonsense, that I may write *mine*.
Throw in a fine Landscape, to make it complete—
A Flower-piece—a Foreground—all tinted so neat,
As Nature herself, could she see it, would strike
With envy to think that she ne'er did the like.
Next forget not to stuff it with autographs plenty,
All writ in a style so genteel, and so dainty,
They no more resemble folk's ord'nary writing,
Than lines, penn'd with pains, do extemp'ral enditing;
Our every day countenance (pardon the stricture)
The faces we make when we sit for our picture.
Thus you have, dearest ——, an Album complete——

We forget the rest—but seriously we deprecate with all our powers the unfeminine practice of this novel species of importunity. We have known Young Ladies—ay, and of those who have been modest and retiring enough upon other occasions—in quest of these delicacies, to besiege, and storm by violence, the closets and privatest retirements of a literary man, to whom they have had an imperfect, or, perhaps, no introduction at all. But the disease has gone forth. Like the daughters of the horseleech in the Proverbs, the requisition of every female now is, *Contribute, Contribute.* 'From the Land's End to Farthest Thule the cry has gone out, and who shall resist it ? Assuming then, that Album Verses *will* be written, where was the harm, if Mr. L. first taught us how they might be best, and most characteristically written ? '

Amid the vague, dreamy, wordy, *matterless* Poetry of this empty age, the verses of such a writer as Bourne (who was a Latin *Prior*) are invaluable. They fix upon *something ;* they ally themselves to common life and objects ; their good nature is a Catholicon, sanative of coxcombry, of heartlessness, and of fastidiousness. *Vale, Lepidissimum Caput.*[a]

[a] Of this writer we only know, that he was an usher some seventy

THE DEATH OF MUNDEN

[Printed in *The Athenæum*, Feb. 11, 1832, under the title, *Munden, the Comedian.* First collected in *The Complete Correspondence*, &c., Moxon, 1868–1870.]

To the Editor of The Athenæum

Dear Sir,—Your communication to me of the death of Munden made me weep. Now, Sir, I am not of the melting mood. But, in these serious times, the loss of half the world's fun is no trivial deprivation. It was my loss (or *gain* shall I call it ?) in the early time of my play-going, to have missed all Munden's acting. There was only he, and Lewis at Covent Garden, while Drury Lane was exuberant with Parsons, Dodd, &c., such a comic company as, I suppose, the stage never showed. Thence, in the evening of my life, I had Munden all to myself, more mellowed, richer perhaps than ever. I cannot say what his change of faces produced in me. It was not acting. He was not one of my 'old actors'. It might be better. His power was extravagant. I saw him one evening in three drunken characters. Three Farces were played. One part was *Dosey*—I forget the rest :—but they were so discriminated, that a stranger might have seen them all, and not have dreamed that he was seeing the same actor. I am jealous for the actors who pleased my youth. He was not a Parsons or a Dodd, but he was more wonderful. He seemed as if he could *do* anything. He was not an actor, but something *better*, if you please. Shall I instance *Old Foresight*, in 'Love for Love', in which Parsons was at once the old man, the astrologer, &c. Munden dropped the old man, the doater—which makes the character—but he substituted for it a moon-struck character, a perfect abstraction from this earth, that looked as if he had newly come down from the planets. Now, *that* is not what I call *acting*. It might be better. He was imaginative ; he could impress upon an audience an *idea*—the low one perhaps of a leg of mutton and turnips ;

years since at Westminster School ; and that Dr. Johnson (who knew him) speaks of him always affectionately as 'poor Vinny Bourne'.

but such was the grandeur and singleness of his expressions, that that single expression would convey to all his auditory a notion of all the pleasures they had all received from all the legs of mutton *and turnips* they had ever eaten in their lives. Now, this is not *acting*, nor do I set down Munden amongst my old actors. He was only a wonderful man, exerting his vivid impressions through the agency of the stage. In one only thing did I see him *act*—that is, support a character; it was in a wretched farce, called 'Johnny Gilpin', for Dowton's benefit, in which he did a cockney; the thing ran but one night; but when I say that Liston's *Lubin Log* was nothing to it, I say little; it was transcendant. And here, let me say of actors—*envious* actors—that of *Munden*, Liston was used to speak, almost with the enthusiasm due to the dead, in terms of such allowed superiority to every actor on the stage, and this at a time when Munden was gone by in the world's estimation, that it convinced me that *artists* (in which term I include poets, painters, &c.), are not so envious as the world think. I have little time, and therefore enclose a criticism on Munden's *Old Dosey* and his general acting, by a gentleman, who attends less to these things than formerly, but whose criticism I think masterly.

C. Lamb.

REVIEW OF MOXON'S SONNETS

[Sonnets. By Edward Moxon. (Printed for private circulation only)]

[Printed in *The Athenæum*, April 13, 1833. First identified by Mr. J. A. Rutter, 1900, and collected by Mr. E. V. Lucas, *Works*, &c., vol. i, 1903.]

A copy of this unassuming work has fallen in our way. We are critics on *publications* only. It is like criticising a domestic conversation, or a friendly letter, to notice a little book, professedly not meant for the public eye. But we are pleased, and pleasure will speak out when discretion whispers it to be still. The author has professional reasons to be private. With them we have nothing to do, but to say, that if unabating industry, integrity above his avoca-

tion, unparalleled success for the short time he has entered upon it, are any auguries of success, this notice of ours will not hinder his calling. We have no parallel for this mixed character—qualities united seemingly at farthest variance —except in fine old Humphrey Mosely, the *stationer* (so were booksellers termed in the good old times), who, for love only, not for lucre, ushered into the world the first poems of Waller, the Juvenilia of Milton, besides a lesser galaxy of the poets of his day, with *Prefaces*, of his own honest composing, worthy of the strains they preluded to. Turn, reader, to his introduction to the Minor Poems of Milton, and say, if that soul, which inspirits it, worked for gain. H. M. (bibliomanists will gladlier recognise him by his initials) was, in his day, what we hope E. M. will prove in his, the fosterer of poetry, not merely the sordid trader in it. We must steal a sonnet or two from this sealed book, to justify our expectations. The first shall be 'To the Nightingale': the originality of the concluding thought, and general sweetness of the versification, make us, reluctantly almost, give it the preference.

Lone midnight-soothing melancholy bird,
That send'st such music to my sleepless soul,
Chaining her faculties in fast controul,
Few listen to thy song; yet I have heard,
When Man and Nature slept, nor aspen stirr'd,
Thy mournful voice, sweet vigil of the sleeping—
And liken'd thee to some angelic mind,
That sits and mourns for erring mortals weeping;
The genius, not of groves, but of mankind,
Watch at this solemn hour o'er millions keeping.
In Eden's bowers, as mighty poets tell,
Did'st thou repeat, as now, that wailing call—
Those sorrowing notes might seem, sad Philomel,
Prophetic to have mourn'd of *man* the *fall*.

One more, and we have done. We mistake, if a Petrarch-like delicacy is not to be found in the following:—

Methought my Love was dead. O, 'twas a night
Of dreary weeping, and of bitter woe!
Methought I saw her lovely spirit go
With lingering looks into yon star so bright,
Which then assumed such a beauteous light,
That all the fires in heaven compared with this
Were scarce perceptible to my weak sight.
There seem'd henceforth the haven of my bliss;

To that I turn'd with fervency of soul,
And pray'd that morn might never break again,
But o'er me that pure planet still remain.
Alas! o'er it my vows had no controul.
The lone star set: I woke; full glad, I deem,
To find my sorrow but a *Lover's Dream*!

THOUGHTS ON PRESENTS OF GAME, &c.

[Printed in *The Athenæum*, Nov. 30, 1833; signed Elia. First collected in *The Complete Correspondence*, &c., Moxon, 1868–1870.]

'We love to have our friend in the country sitting thus at our table *by proxy;* to apprehend his presence (though a hundred miles may be between us) by a turkey, whose goodly aspect reflects to us his "plump corpusculum"; to taste him in grouse or woodcock; to feel him gliding down in the toast peculiar to the latter; to concorporate him in a slice of Canterbury brawn. This is indeed to have him within ourselves; to know him intimately; such participation is methinks *unitive*, as the old theologians phrase it.'—Last Essays of Elia.

Elia presents his acknowledgments to his 'Correspondent unknown', for a basket of prodigiously fine game. He takes for granted that so amiable a character must be a reader of the *Athenæum*. Else he had meditated a notice in *The Times*. Now if this friend had consulted the Delphic oracle for a present suited to the palate of Elia, he could not have hit upon a morsel so acceptable. The birds he is barely thankful for; pheasants are poor *fowls* disguised in fine feathers. But a hare roasted hard and brown—with gravy and melted butter!—old Mr. Chambers, the sensible clergyman in Warwickshire, whose son's acquaintance has made many hours happy in the life of Elia, used to allow a pound of Epping to every hare. Perhaps that was over-doing it. But, in spite of the note of Philomel, who, like some fine poets, that think no scorn to adopt plagiarisms from a humble brother, reiterates every spring her cuckoo cry of 'Jug, Jug, Jug', Elia pronounces that a hare, to be truly palated, must be roasted. Jugging sophisticates her. In *our* way it eats so 'crips', as Mrs. Minikin says. Time was, when Elia was not arrived at his taste, that he preferred to all luxuries a roasted Pig. But he disclaims all such green-sickness appetites in future, though he hath

to acknowledge the receipt of many a delicacy in that kind from correspondents—good, but mistaken men—in consequence of their erroneous supposition, that he had carried up into mature life the prepossessions of childhood. From the worthy Vicar of Enfield he acknowledges a tithe contribution of extraordinary sapor. The ancients must have loved hares. Else why adopt the word *lepores* (obviously from *lepus*) but for some subtle analogy between the delicate flavour of the latter, and the finer relishes of wit in what we most poorly translate *pleasantries*. The fine madnesses of the poet are the very decoction of his diet. Thence is he hare-brained. Harum-scarum is a libellous unfounded phrase of modern usage. 'Tis true the hare is the most circumspect of animals, sleeping with her eye open. Her ears, ever erect, keep them in that wholesome exercise, which conduces them to form the very tit-bit of the admirers of this noble animal. Noble will I call her, in spite of her detractors, who from occasional demonstrations of the principle of self-preservation (common to all animals) infer in her a defect of heroism. Half a hundred horsemen with thrice the number of dogs, scour the country in pursuit of puss across three counties; and because the well-flavoured beast, weighing the odds, is willing to evade the hue and cry, with her delicate ears shrinking perchance from discord—comes the grave Naturalist, Linnæus perchance or Buffon, and gravely sets down the Hare as a—timid animal. Why, Achilles, or Bully Dawson, would have declined the preposterous combat.

In fact, how light of digestion we feel after a hare! How tender its processes after swallowing! What chyle it promotes! How etherial! as if its living celerity were a type of its nimble coursing through the animal juices. The notice might be longer. It is intended less as a Natural History of the Hare, than a cursory thanks to the country 'good Unknown'. The hare has many friends, but none sincerer than

ELIA.

TABLE-TALK BY THE LATE ELIA

[Printed in *The Athenæum*, Jan. 4, May 31, June 7, July 19, 1834. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

(*The Athenæum*, January 4, 1834.)

THE greatest pleasure I know, is to do a good action by stealth, and to have it found out by accident.

'Tis unpleasant to meet a beggar. It is painful to deny him; and, if you relieve him, it is so much out of your pocket.

Men marry for fortune, and sometimes to please their fancy; but, much oftener than is suspected, they consider what the world will say of it; how such a woman in their friends' eyes will look at the head of a table. Hence, we see so many insipid beauties made wives of, that could not have struck the particular fancy of any man, that had any fancy at all. These I call *furniture wives;* as men buy *furniture pictures*, because they suit this or that niche in their dining parlours.

Your universally cried-up beauties are the very last choice which a man of taste would make. What pleases all, cannot have that individual charm, which makes this or that countenance engaging to you, and to you only perhaps, you know not why. What gained the fair Gunnings titled husbands, who, after all, turned out very sorry wives? Popular repute.

It is a sore trial when a daughter shall marry against her father's approbation. A little hard-heartedness, and aversion to a reconcilement, is almost pardonable. After all, Will Dockwray's way is perhaps the wisest. His best-beloved daughter made a most imprudent match; in fact, eloped with the last man in the world that her father would have wished her to marry. All the world said that he would never speak to her again. For months she durst not write to him, much less come near him. But, in a casual rencounter, he met her in the streets of Ware;—Ware, that will long remember the mild virtues of William Dockwray, Esq.

What said the parent to his disobedient child, whose knees faltered under her at the sight of him? 'Ha! Sukey, is it you?' with that benevolent aspect, with which he paced the streets of Ware, venerated as an angel, 'come and dine with us on Sunday'; then turning away, and again turning back, as if he had forgotten something, he added, 'and Sukey, do you hear, bring your husband with you.' This was all the reproof she ever heard from him. Need it be added, that the match turned out better for Susan than the world expected?

'We read the Paradise Lost as a task,' says Dr. Johnson. Nay, rather as a celestial recreation, of which the dullard mind is not at all hours alike recipient. 'Nobody ever wished it longer';—nor the moon rounder, he might have added. Why, 'tis the perfectness and completeness of it, which makes us imagine that not a line could be added to it, or diminished from it, with advantage. Would we have a cubit added to the stature of the Medicean Venus? Do we wish her taller?

(*The Athenæum*, May 31, 1834.)

Lear. Who are you?
Mine eyes are not o' the best: I'll tell you straight.
. . . . . Are you not Kent?
Kent. The same;
Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?
Lear. He's a good fellow, I can tell you that;
He'll strike, and quickly too; he 's dead and rotten.
Kent. No, my good Lord; I am the very man——
Lear. I'll see that straight——
Kent. That from your first of difference and decay,
Have follow'd your sad steps.
Lear. You are welcome hither . . . . . .
Albany. He knows not what he says; and vain it is
That we present us to him.
Edgar. Look up, my Lord.
Kent. Vex not his ghost. O, let him pass! He hates him.
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

So ends 'King Lear', the most stupendous of the Shakspearian dramas; and Kent, the noblest feature of the conceptions of his divine mind. This is the magnanimity of authorship, when a writer, having a topic presented to

him, fruitful of beauties for common minds, waives his privilege, and trusts to the judicious few for understanding the reason of his abstinence. What a pudder would a common dramatist have raised here of a reconciliation scene, a perfect recognition, between the assumed Caius and his master!—to the suffusing of many fair eyes, and the moistening of cambric handkerchiefs. The old dying king partially catching at the truth, and immediately lapsing into obliviousness, with the high-minded carelessness of the other to have his services appreciated, as one that

> ——served not for gain,
> Or follow'd out of form,

are among the most judicious, not to say heart-touching, strokes in Shakspeare.

Allied to this magnanimity it is, where the pith and point of an argument, the amplification of which might compromise the modesty of the speaker, is delivered briefly, and, as it were, *parenthetically;* as in those few but pregnant words, in which the man in the old 'Nut-brown Maid' rather intimates than reveals his unsuspected high birth to the woman:—

> Now understand, to Westmorland,
> *Which is my heritage,*
> I will you bring, and with a ring,
> By way of marriage,
> I will you take, and Lady make.

Turn we to the version of it, ten times diluted, of dear Mat. Prior—in his own way unequalled, and a poet now-a-days too much neglected—'In me,' quoth Henry, addressing the astounded Emma—with a flourish and an attitude, as we may conceive:—

> In me behold the potent Edgar's heir,
> Illustrious Earl! him terrible in war,
> Let Loire confess.

And with a deal of skimble-skamble stuff, as Hotspur would term it, more, presents the Lady with a full and true enumeration of his Papa's rent-roll in the fat soil by Deva.

But of all parentheses, (not to quit the topic too suddenly)

commend me to that most significant one, at the commencement of the old popular ballad of Fair Rosamund :—

> When good King Henry ruled this land,
> The second of that name,

Now mark—

> (Besides the Queen) he dearly loved
> A fair and comely dame.

There is great virtue in this *besides*.

Amidst the complaints of the wide spread of infidelity among us, it is consolatory that a sect is sprung up in the heart of the metropolis, and is daily on the increase, of teachers of that healing doctrine, which Pope upheld, and against which Voltaire directed his envenomed wit. We mean those practical preachers of optimism, or the belief that *Whatever is is best*—the Cads of Omnibuses ; who, from their little back pulpits—not once in three or four hours, as those proclaimers of ' God and his prophet ' in Mussulman countries ; but every minute, at the entry or exit of a brief passenger, are heard, in an almost prophetic tone, to exclaim—(Wisdom crying out, as it were, in the streets,)—ALL'S RIGHT.

(*The Athenæum*, June 7, 1834.)

Advice is not so commonly thrown away as is imagined. We seek it in difficulties. But, in common speech, we are apt to confound with it *admonition ;* as when a friend reminds one that drink is prejudicial to the health, &c. We do not care to be told of that which we know better than the good man that admonishes. M—— sent to his friend L——, who is no water-drinker, a twopenny tract ' Against the Use of Fermented Liquors '. L—— acknowledged the obligation, as far as to *twopence*. Penotier's advice was the safest after all :

' I advised him—— '

But I must tell you. The dear, good-meaning, no-thinking creature, had been dumb-founding a company of us with a detail of inextricable difficulties, in which the circumstances of an acquaintance of his were involved. No clue of light offered itself. He grew more and more

misty as he proceeded. We pitied his friend, and thought,

God help the man so wrapt in error's endless maze:

when, suddenly brightening up his placid countenance, like one that had found out a riddle, and looked to have the solution admired, 'At last,' said he, 'I advised him——'

Here he paused, and here we were again interminably thrown back. By no possible guess could any of us aim at the drift of the meaning he was about to be delivered of. 'I advised him,' he repeated, 'to have some *advice* upon the subject.' A general approbation followed; and it was unanimously agreed, that, under all the circumstances of the case, no sounder or more judicious counsel could have been given.

A laxity pervades the popular use of words. Parson W—— is not quite so continent as Diana, yet prettily dissembleth his frailty. Is Parson W—— therefore a *hypocrite?* I think *not.* Where the concealment of a vice is less pernicious than the bare-faced publication of it would be, no additional delinquency is incurred in the secrecy. Parson W—— is simply an immoral clergyman. But if Parson W—— were to be for ever haranguing on the opposite virtue,—choosing for his perpetual text, in preference to all other pulpit topics, the remarkable resistance recorded in the 39th of Genesis—dwelling, moreover, and dilating upon it—then Parson W—— might be reasonably suspected of hypocrisy. But Parson W—— rarely diverteth into such line of argument, or toucheth it briefly. His ordinary topics are fetched from 'obedience to the powers that are'—'submission to the civil magistrate in all commands that are not absolutely unlawful'; on which he can delight to expatiate with equal fervour and sincerity. Again, to *despise* a person is properly to *look down* upon him with none, or the least possible emotion. But when Clementina, who has lately lost her lover, with bosom heaving, eyes flashing, and her whole frame in agitation, pronounces, with a peculiar emphasis, that she '*despises* the fellow', depend upon it that he is not quite so despicable in her eyes as she would have us imagine.—One more instance:—If we must naturalize that portentous phrase,

a truism, it were well that we limited the use of it. Every commonplace or trite observation is not a truism. For example: A good name helps a man on in the world. This is nothing but a simple truth, however hackneyed. It has a distinct subject and predicate. But when the thing predicated is involved in the term of the subject, and so necessarily involved that by no possible conception they can be separated, then it becomes a truism; as to say, A good name is a proof of a man's estimation in the world. We seem to be saying something when we say nothing. I was describing to F—— some knavish tricks of a mutual friend of ours. 'If he did so and so,' was the reply, 'he cannot be an honest man.' Here was a genuine truism—truth upon truth—inference and proposition identical; or rather a dictionary definition usurping the place of an inference.

(*The Athenæum*, July 19, 1834.)

The vices of some men are magnificent. Compare the amours of Henry the Eighth and Charles the Second. The Stuart had mistresses—the Tudor *kept* wives.

We are ashamed at sight of a monkey—somehow as we are shy of poor relations.

C—— imagined a Caledonian compartment in Hades, where there should be fire without sulphur.

Absurd images are sometimes irresistible. I will mention two. An elephant in a coach-office gravely coming to have his trunk booked;—a mermaid over a fish-kettle cooking her own tail.

It is the praise of Shakspeare, with reference to the play-writers, his contemporaries, that he has so few revolting characters. Yet he has one that is singularly mean and disagreeable—the King in Hamlet. Neither has he characters of insignificance, unless the phantom that stalks over the stage as Julius Cæsar, in the play of that name, may be accounted one. Neither has he envious characters, excepting the short part of Don John, in Much Ado about Nothing. Neither has he unentertaining characters, if we except Parolles, and the little that there is of the Clown, in All's Well that Ends Well.

It would settle the dispute, as to whether Shakspeare intended Othello for a jealous character, to consider how differently we are affected towards him, and for Leontes in the Winter's Tale. Leontes *is* that character. Othello's fault was simply credulity.

Is it possible that Shakspeare should never have read Homer, in Chapman's version at least ? If he had read it, could he mean to *travesty* it in the parts of those big boobies, Ajax and Achilles ? Ulysses, Nestor, and Agamemnon, are true to their parts in the Iliad : they are gentlemen at least. Thersites, though unamusing, is fairly deducible from it. Troilus and Cressida are a fine graft upon it. But those two big bulks——

It is a desideratum in words that treat *de re culinariâ*, that we have no rationale of sauces, or theory of mixed flavours ; as to show why cabbage is reprehensible with roast beef, laudable with bacon ; why the haunch of mutton seeks the alliance of currant jelly, the shoulder civilly declineth it ; why loin of veal (a pretty problem), being itself unctuous, seeketh the adventitious lubricity of melted butter ; and why the same part in pork, not more oleaginous, abhorreth from it ; why the French bean sympathizes with the flesh of deer ; why salt fish points to parsnip, brawn makes a dead set at mustard ; why cats prefer valerian to hearts-ease, old ladies *vice versâ*—though this is rather travelling out of the road of the dietetics, and may be thought a question more curious than relevant ;—why salmon (a strong sapor *per se*,) fortifieth its condition with the mighty lobster sauce, whose embraces are fatal to the delicater relish of the turbot ; why oysters in death rise up against the contamination of brown sugar, while they are posthumously amorous of vinegar ; why the sour mango and the sweet jam by turns court, and are accepted by, the compliable mutton hash—she not yet decidedly declaring for either. We are as yet but in the empirical stage of cookery. We feed ignorantly, and want to be able to give a reason of the relish that is in us ; so that if Nature should furnish us with a new meat, or be prodigally pleased to restore the phœnix, upon a *given* flavour, we might be able to pronounce instantly, on

philosophical principles, what the sauce to it should be—what the curious adjuncts.

THE DEATH OF COLERIDGE

In the Album of Mr. Keymer

[Written by Lamb in the album of Mr. Keymer, a London bookseller, and inserted by John Forster in his memorial notice of Lamb, *The New Monthly Magazine*, Feb., 1835. First collected by Mr. J. E. Babson, *Eliana*, 1864.]

When I heard of the death of Coleridge, it was without grief. It seemed to me that he long had been on the confines of the next world,—that he had a hunger for eternity. I grieved then that I could not grieve. But since, I feel how great a part he was of me. His great and dear spirit haunts me. I cannot think a thought, I cannot make a criticism on men or books, without an ineffectual turning and reference to him. He was the proof and touchstone of all my cogitations. He was a Grecian (or in the first form) at Christ's Hospital, where I was deputy Grecian; and the same subordination and deference to him I have preserved through a life-long acquaintance. Great in his writings, he was greatest in his conversation. In him was disproved that old maxim, that we should allow every one his share of talk. He would talk from morn to dewy eve, nor cease till far midnight, yet who ever would interrupt him,—who would obstruct that continuous flow of converse, fetched from Helicon or Zion? He had the tact of making the unintelligible seem plain. Many who read the abstruser parts of his 'Friend' would complain that his works did not answer to his spoken wisdom. They were identical. But he had a tone in oral delivery, which seemed to convey sense to those who were otherwise imperfect recipients. He was my fifty years old friend without a dissension. Never saw I his likeness, nor probably the world can see again. I seemed to love the house he died at more passionately than when he lived. I love the faithful Gilmans more than while they exercised their virtues towards him living. What was his mansion is consecrated to me a chapel.

Edmonton, *November* 21, 1834. Chs. Lamb.

CUPID'S REVENGE

[Date uncertain. First printed in *Harper's Magazine*, Dec., 1858. Collected in Mr. J. E. Babson's *Eliana*, 1864.]

Leontius, Duke of Lycia, who in times past had borne the character of a wise and just governor, and was endeared to all ranks of his subjects, in his latter days fell into a sort of dotage, which manifested itself in an extravagant fondness for his daughter Hidaspes. This young maiden, with the Prince Leucippus, her brother, were the only remembrances left to him of a deceased and beloved consort. For *her* nothing was thought too precious. Existence was of no value to him but as it afforded opportunities of gratifying her wishes. To be instrumental in relieving her from the least little pain, or grief, he would have lavished his treasures to the giving away of the one half of his dukedom.

All this deference on the part of the parent had yet no power upon the mind of the daughter to move her at any time to solicit any unbecoming suit, or to disturb the even tenor of her thoughts. The humility and dutifulness of her carriage seemed to keep pace with his apparent willingness to release her from the obligations of either. She might have satisfied her wildest humors and caprices; but in truth no such troublesome guests found harbor in the bosom of the quiet and unaspiring maiden.

Thus far the prudence of the Princess served to counteract any ill effects which this ungovernable partiality in a parent was calculated to produce in a less virtuous nature than Hidaspes's; and this foible of the duke's, so long as no evil resulted from it, was passed over by the courtiers as a piece of harmless frenzy.

But upon a solemn day—a sad one, as it proved for Lycia—when the returning anniversary of the Princess's birth was kept with extraordinary rejoicings, the infatuated father set no bounds to his folly, but would have his subjects to do homage to her for that day, as to their natural sovereign; as if he, indeed, had been dead, and she, to the exclusion of the male succession, was become the rightful ruler of Lycia. He saluted her by the style of Duchess;

and with a terrible oath, in the presence of his nobles, he confirmed to her the grant of all things whatsoever that she should demand on that day, and for the six next following; and if she should ask any thing the execution of which must be deferred until after his death, he pronounced a dreadful curse upon his son and successor, if he failed to see to the performance of it.

Thus encouraged, the Princess stepped forth with a modest boldness, and, as if assured of no denial, spake as follows:

But before we acquaint you with the purport of her speech, we must premise, that in the land of Lycia, which was at that time pagan, above all their other gods the inhabitants did in an especial manner adore the deity who was supposed to have influence in the disposing of people's affections in *love*. Him, by the name of God Cupid, they feigned to be a *beautiful boy*, and *winged*, as indeed, between young persons these frantic passions are usually least under constraint; while the wings might signify the haste with which these ill-judged attachments are commonly dissolved, and do indeed go away as lightly as they come, flying away in an instant to light upon some newer fancy. They painted him *blindfolded*, because these silly affections of lovers make them blind to the defects of the beloved object, which every one is quick-sighted enough to discover but themselves; or because love is for the most part led blindly, rather than directed by the open eye of the judgment, in the hasty choice of a mate. Yet, with that inconsistency of attributes with which the heathen people commonly over-complimented their deities, this blind love, this Cupid, they figured with a bow and arrows; and, being sightless, they yet feigned him to be a notable archer and an unerring marksman. No heart was supposed to be proof against the point of his inevitable dart. By such incredible fictions did these poor pagans make a shift to excuse their vanities, and to give a sanction to their irregular affections, under the notion that love was irresistible; whereas, in a well-regulated mind, these amorous conceits either find no place at all, or, having gained a footing, are easily stifled in the beginning by a wise and manly resolution.

This frenzy in the people had long been a source of disquiet to the discreet Princess, and many were the conferences she had held with the virtuous Prince, her brother, as to the best mode of taking off the minds of the Lycians from this vain superstition. An occasion, furnished by the blind grant of the old Duke, their father, seemed now to present itself.

The courtiers, then, being assembled to hear the demand which the Princess should make, began to conjecture, each one according to the bent of his own disposition, what the thing would be that she should ask for. One said, 'Now surely she will ask to have the disposal of the revenues of some wealthy province, to lay them out—as was the manner of Eastern princesses—in costly dresses and jewels becoming a lady of so great expectancies.' Another thought that she would seek an extension of power, as women naturally love rule and dominion. But the most part were in hope that she was about to beg the hand of some neighbor prince in marriage, who, by the wealth and contiguity of his dominions, might add strength and safety to the realm of Lycia. But in none of these things was the expectation of these crafty and worldly-minded courtiers gratified. For Hidaspes, first making lowly obeisance to her father, and thanking him on bended knees for so great grace conferred upon her—according to a plan preconcerted with Leucippus—made suit as follows :

'Your loving care of me, O princely father, by which in my tenderest age you made up to me for the loss of a mother at those years when I was scarcely able to comprehend the misfortune, and your bounties to me ever since, have left me nothing to ask for myself, as wanting and desiring nothing. But for the people whom you govern I beg and desire a boon. It is known to all nations that the men of Lycia are noted for a vain and fruitless superstition—the more hateful as it bears a show of true religion, but is indeed nothing more than a self-pleasing and bold wantonness. Many ages before this, when every man had taken to himself a trade, as hating idleness far worse than death, some one that gave himself to sloth and wine, finding himself by his neighbours rebuked for his unprofitable life, framed to himself a God whom he pre-

tended to obey in his dishonesty; and, for a name, he called him Cupid. This God of merely man's creating—as the nature of man is ever credulous of any vice which takes part with his dissolute conditions—quickly found followers enough. They multiplied in every age, especially among your Lycians, who to this day remain adorers of this drowsy Deity, who certainly was first invented in drink, as sloth and luxury are commonly the first movers in these idle love-passions. This *winged Boy*—for so they fancy him—has his sacrifices, his loose Images set up in the land through all the villages—nay, your own sacred palace is not exempt from them—to the scandal of sound devotion and dishonour of the true Deities, which are only they who give good gifts to man—as Ceres, who gives us corn; the planter of the olive, Pallas; Neptune, who directs the track of ships over the great ocean, and binds distant lands together in friendly commerce; the inventor of medicine and music, Apollo; and the cloud-compelling Thunderer of Olympus. Whereas the gifts of this idle Deity—if, indeed, he have a being at all out of the brain of his frantic worshipers—usually prove destructive and pernicious. My suit, then, is, that this unseemly Idol throughout the land be plucked down and cast into the fire; and that the adoring of the same may be prohibited on pain of death to any of your subjects henceforth found so offending.'

Leontius, startled at this unexpected demand from the Princess, with tears besought her to ask some wiser thing, and not to bring down upon herself and him the indignation of so great a God.

'There is no such God as you dream of,' said then Leucippus, boldly, who had hitherto forborne to second the petition of the Princess; 'but a vain opinion of him has filled the land with love and wantonness. Every young man and maiden that feel the least desire to one another, dare in no case to suppress it, for they think it to be Cupid's motion, and that he is a God!'

Thus pressed by the solicitations of both his children, and fearing the oath which he had taken, in an evil hour the misgiving father consented; and a proclamation was sent throughout all the provinces for the putting down of

the Idol, and the suppression of the established Cupid-worship.

Notable, you may be sure, was the stir made in all places among the priests, and among the artificers in gold, in silver, or in marble; who made a gainful trade, either in serving at the altar or in the manufacture of the images no longer to be tolerated. The cry was clamorous as *that* at Ephesus, when a kindred Idol was in danger; for 'great had been Cupid of the Lycians'. Nevertheless the power of the Duke, backed by the power of his more popular children, prevailed; and the destruction of every vestige of the old religion was but as the work of one day throughout the country.

And now, as the Pagan chronicles of Lycia inform us, the displeasure of Cupid went out—the displeasure of a great God—flying through all the dukedom, and sowing evils. But upon the first movers of the profanation his angry hand lay heaviest, and there was imposed upon them a strange misery, that all might know that Cupid's revenge was mighty. With his arrows hotter than plagues, or than his own anger, did he fiercely right himself; nor could the prayers of a few concealed worshipers, nor the smoke arising from an altar here and there which had escaped the general overthrow, avert his wrath, or make him cease from vengeance, until he had made of the once flourishing country of Lycia a most wretched land. He sent no famines—he let loose no cruel wild beasts among them—inflictions, with one or other of which the rest of the Olympian deities are fabled to have visited the nations under their displeasure—but took a nearer course of his own, and his invisible arrows went to the *moral heart* of Lycia, infecting and filling court and country with desires of unlawful marriages, unheard-of and monstrous affections, prodigious and misbecoming unions.

The symptoms were first visible in the changed bosom of Hidaspes. This exemplary maiden—whose cold modesty, almost to a failing, had discouraged the addresses of so many princely suitors that had sought her hand in marriage—by the venom of this inward pestilence came on a sudden to cast eyes of affection upon a mean and deformed creature, Zoilus by name, who was a dwarf, and lived about the

palace, the common jest of the courtiers. In her besotted eyes he was grown a goodly gentleman. And to her maidens, when any of them reproached him with the defect of his shape in her hearing, she would reply that, ' to them, indeed, he might appear defective, and unlike a man, as, indeed, no man was like unto him, for in form and complexion he was beyond painting. He is like,' she said, ' to nothing that we have seen ; yet he doth resemble Apollo, as I have fancied him, when, rising in the east, he bestirs himself, and shakes daylight from his hair.' And, overcome with a passion which was heavier than she could bear, she confessed herself a wretched creature, and implored forgiveness of God Cupid, whom she had provoked, and, if possible, that he would grant it to her, that she might enjoy her love. Nay, she would court this piece of deformity to his face ; and when the wretch, supposing it to be done in mockery, has said that he could wish himself more ill-shaped than he was, so it could contribute to make her Grace merry, she would reply, ' Oh, think not that I jest ! unless it be a jest not to esteem my life in comparison with thine—to hang a thousand kisses in an hour upon those lips—unless it be a jest to vow that I am willing to become your wife, and to take obedience upon me.' And by his ' own white hand ', taking it in hers—so strong was the delusion—she besought him to swear to marry her.

The term had not yet expired of the seven days within which the doting Duke had sworn to fulfil her will, when, in pursuance of this frenzy, she presented herself before her father, leading in the dwarf by the hand, and, in the face of all the courtiers, solemnly demanding his hand in marriage. And when the apish creature made show of blushing at the unmerited honour, she, to comfort him, bade him not to be ashamed, for ' in her eyes he was worth a kingdom '.

And now, too late, did the fond father repent him of his dotage. But when by no importunity he could prevail upon her to desist from her suit, for his oath's sake he must needs consent to the marriage. But the ceremony was no sooner, to the derision of all present, performed, than, with the just feelings of an outraged parent, he com-

manded the head of the presumptuous bridegroom to be stricken off, and committed the distracted princess close prisoner to her chamber, where, after many deadly swoonings, with intermingled outcries upon the cruelty of her father, she, in no long time after, died, making ineffectual appeals, to the last, to the mercy of the offended Power—the Power that had laid its heavy hand upon her, to the bereavement of her good judgment first, and, finally, at the extinction of a life that might have proved a blessing to Lycia.

Leontius had scarcely time to be sensible of her danger before a fresh cause for mourning overtook him. His son Leucippus, who had hitherto been a pattern of strict life and modesty, was stricken with a second arrow from the Deity, offended for his overturned altars, in which the Prince had been a chief instrument. The God caused his heart to fall away, and his crazed fancy to be smitten with the excelling beauty of a wicked widow, by name Bacha. This woman, in the first days of her mourning for her husband, by her dissembling tears and affected coyness had drawn Leucippus so cunningly into her snares, that, before she would grant him a return of love, she extorted from the easy-hearted prince a contract of marriage, to be fulfilled in the event of his father's death. This guilty intercourse, which they covered with the name of marriage, was not carried with such secrecy but that a rumor of it ran about the palace ; and by some officious courtier was brought to the ears of the old Duke, who, to satisfy himself of the truth, came hastily to the house of Bacha, where he found his son courting. Taking the Prince to task roundly, he sternly asked who that creature was that had bewitched him out of his honor thus. Then Bacha, pretending ignorance of the Duke's person, haughtily demanded of Leucippus what saucy old man that was, that without leave had burst into the house of an afflicted widow to hinder her paying her tears (as she pretended) to the dead. Then the Duke declaring himself, and threatening her for having corrupted his son, giving her the reproachful terms of witch and sorceress, Leucippus mildly answered that he ' did her wrong '. The bad woman, imagining that the Prince for very fear would not betray their secret, now conceived

a project of monstrous wickedness, which was no less than to insnare the father with the same arts which had subdued the son; that she might no longer be a concealed wife, nor a Princess only under cover, but by a union with the old man become at once the true and acknowledged Duchess of Lycia. In a posture of humility she confessed her ignorance of the Duke's quality, but, now she knew it, she besought his pardon for her wild speeches, which proceeded, she said, from a distempered head, which the loss of her dear husband had affected. He might command her life, she told him, which was now of small value to her. The tears which had accompanied her words, and her mourning weeds (which, for a blind to the world, she had not yet cast off) heightening her beauty, gave a credence to her protestations of her innocence. But the duke continuing to assail her with reproaches, with a matchless confidence, assuming the air of injured virtue, in a somewhat lofty tone she replied, that, though he were her sovereign, to whom in any lawful cause she was bound to submit, yet, if he sought to take away her honor, she stood up to defy him. *That*, she said, was a jewel dearer than any he could give her, which so long as she should keep she should esteem herself richer than all the princes of the earth that were without it. If the Prince, his son, knew any thing to her dishonor, let him tell it. And here she challenged Leucippus before his father to speak the worst of her. If he would, however, sacrifice a woman's character to please an unjust humor of the Duke's, she saw no remedy, she said, now *he* was dead (meaning her late husband) that with his life would have defended her reputation.

Thus appealed to, Leucippus, who had stood a while astonished at her confident falsehoods, though ignorant of the full drift of them, considering that not the reputation only, but probably the life of a woman whom he had so loved, and who had made such sacrifices to him of love and beauty, depended upon his absolute concealment of their contract, framed his mouth to a compassionate untruth, and with solemn asseverations confirmed to his father her assurances of her innocence. He denied not that with rich gifts he had assailed her virtue, but had

found her relentless to his solicitations; that gold nor greatness had any power over her. Nay, so far he went on to give force to the protestations of this artful woman, that he confessed to having offered marriage to her, which she, who scorned to listen to any second wedlock, had rejected.

All this while Leucippus secretly prayed to Heaven to forgive him while he uttered these bold untruths, since it was for the prevention of a greater mischief only, and had no malice in it.

But, warned by the sad sequel which ensued, be thou careful, young reader, how in any case you tell a lie. Lie not, if any man but ask you, 'How you do?' or 'What o'clock it is?' Be sure you make no false excuse to screen a friend that is most dear to you. Never let the most well-intended falsehood escape your lips. For Heaven, which is entirely Truth, will make the seed which you have sown of Untruth to yield miseries a thousand-fold upon yours, as it did upon the head of the ill-fated and mistaken Leucippus.

Leontius, finding the assurances of Bacha so confidently seconded by his son, could no longer withhhold his belief, and, only forbidding their meeting for the future, took a courteous leave of the lady, presenting her at the same time with a valuable ring, in recompense, as he said, of the injustice which he had done her in his false surmises of her guiltiness. In truth, the surpassing beauty of the lady, with her appearing modesty, had made no less impression upon the heart of the fond old Duke than they had awakened in the bosom of his more pardonable son. His first design was to make her his mistress; to the better accomplishing of which Leucippus was dismissed from the court, under the pretext of some honorable employment abroad. In his absence, Leontius spared no offers to induce her to comply with his purpose. Continually he solicited her with rich offers, with messages, and by personal visits. It was a ridiculous sight, if it were not rather a sad one, to behold this second and worse dotage, which by Cupid's wrath had fallen upon this fantastical *old new lover*. All his occupation now was in dressing and pranking himself up in youthful attire to please the eyes of his new mistress.

His mornings were employed in the devising of trim fashions, in the company of tailors, embroiderers, and feather-dressers. So infatuated was he with these vanities, that when a servant came and told him that his daughter was dead—even she, whom he had but lately so highly prized—the words seemed spoken to a deaf person. He either could not or would not understand them ; but, like one senseless, fell to babbling about the shape of a new hose and doublet. His crutch, the faithful prop of long aged years, was discarded ; and he resumed the youthful fashion of a sword by his side, when his years wanted strength to have drawn it. In this condition of folly it was no difficult task for the widow, by affected pretenses of honour and arts of amorous denial, to draw in this doting Duke to that which she had all along aimed at, the offer of his crown in marriage. She was now Duchess of Lycia ! In her new elevation the mask was quickly thrown aside, and the impious Bacha appeared in her true qualities. She had never loved the Duke her husband, but had used him as the instrument of her greatness. Taking advantage of his amorous folly, which seemed to gain growth the nearer he approached to his grave, she took upon her the whole rule of Lycia ; placing and displacing at her will all the great officers of state ; and filling the court with creatures of her own, the agents of her guilty pleasures, she removed from the Duke's person the oldest and trustiest of his dependents.

Leucippus, who at this juncture was returned from his foreign mission, was met at once with the news of his sister's death and the strange wedlock of the old Duke. To the memory of Hidaspes he gave some tears. But these were swiftly swallowed up in his horror and detestation of the conduct of Bacha. In his first fury he resolved upon a full disclosure of all that had passed between him and his wicked step-mother. Again he thought, by killing Bacha, to rid the world of a monster. But tenderness for his father recalled him to milder counsels. The fatal secret, nevertheless, sat upon him like lead, while he was determined to confide it to no other. It took his sleep away and his desire of food ; and if a thought of mirth at any time crossed him the dreadful truth would recur to check

it, as if a messenger should have come to whisper to him of some friend's death! With difficulty he was brought to wish their Highnesses faint joy of their marriage; and, at the first sight of Bacha, a friend was fain to hold his wrist hard to prevent him from fainting. In an interview which after, at her request, he had with her alone, the bad woman shamed not to take up the subject lightly; to treat as a trifle the marriage vow that had passed between them; and seeing him sad and silent, to threaten him with the displeasure of the Duke, his father, if by words or looks he gave any suspicion to the world of their dangerous secret. 'What had happened', she said, 'was by no fault of hers. People would have thought her mad if she had refused the Duke's offer. She had used no arts to entrap his father. It was Leucippus's own resolute denial of any such thing as a contract having passed between them which had led to the proposal.'

The Prince, unable to extenuate his share of blame in the calamity, humbly besought her, that 'since by his own great fault things had been brought to their present pass, she would only live honest for the future; and not abuse the credulous age of the old Duke, as he well knew she had the power to do. For himself, seeing that life was no longer desirable to him, if his death was judged by her to be indispensable to her security, she was welcome to lay what trains she pleased to compass it, so long as she would only suffer his father to go to his grave in peace, since *he* had never wronged her.'

This temperate appeal was lost upon the heart of Bacha, who from that moment was secretly bent upon effecting the destruction of Leucippus. Her project was, by feeding the ears of the Duke with exaggerated praises of his son, to awaken a jealousy in the old man that she secretly preferred Leucippus. Next, by wilfully insinuating the great popularity of the Prince (which was no more indeed than the truth) among the Lycians, to instill subtle fears into the Duke that his son had laid plots for circumventing his life and throne. By these arts she was working upon the weak mind of the Duke almost to distraction, when, at a meeting concocted by herself between the Prince and his father, the latter taking Leucippus roundly to task for

these alleged treasons, the Prince replied only by humbly drawing his sword, with the intention of laying it at his father's feet, and begging him, since he suspected him, to sheathe it in his own bosom, for of his life he had been long weary. Bacha entered at the crisis, and ere Leucippus could finish his submission, with loud outcries alarmed the courtiers, who, rushing into the presence, found the Prince, with sword in hand indeed, but with far other intentions than this bad woman imputed to him, plainly accusing him of having drawn it upon his father ! Leucippus was quickly disarmed ; and the old Duke, trembling between fear and age, committed him to close prison, from which, by Bacha's aims, he never should have come out alive but for the interference of the common people, who, loving their Prince, and equally detesting Bacha, in a simultaneous mutiny arose and rescued him from the hands of the officers.

The court was now no longer a place of living for Leucippus, and, hastily thanking his countrymen for his deliverance, which in his heart he rather deprecated than welcomed, as one that wished for death, he took leave of all court hopes, and, abandoning the palace, betook himself to a life of penitence in solitudes.

Not so secretly did he select his place of penance, in a cave among lonely woods and fastnesses, but that his retreat was traced by Bacha ; who, baffled in her purpose, raging like some she-wolf, dispatched an emissary of her own to destroy him privately.

There was residing at the court of Lycia at this time a young maiden, the daughter of Bacha by her first husband, who had hitherto been brought up in the obscurity of a poor country abode with an uncle, but whom Bacha now publicly owned, and had prevailed upon the easy Duke to adopt as successor to the throne in wrong of the true heir, his suspected son Leucippus.

This young creature, Urania by name, was as artless and harmless as her mother was crafty and wicked. To the unnatural Bacha she had been an object of neglect and aversion ; and for the project of supplanting Leucippus only had she fetched her out of retirement. The bringing-up of Urania had been among country hinds and lasses ; to

tend her flocks or superintend her neat dairy had been the extent of her breeding. From her calling she had contracted a pretty rusticity of dialect, which, among the fine folks of the court, passed for simplicity and folly. She was the unfittest instrument for an ambitious design that could be chosen, for her manners in a palace had a tinge still of her old occupation, and to her mind the lowly shepherdess's life was best.

Simplicity is oft a match for prudence ; and Urania was not so simple but she understood that she had been sent for to court only in the Prince's wrong, and in her heart she was determined to defeat any designs that might be contriving against her brother-in-law. The melancholy bearing of Leucippus had touched her with pity. This wrought in her a kind of love, which, for its object, had no further end than the well-being of the beloved. She looked for no return of it, nor did the possibility of such a blessing in the remotest way occur to her—so vast a distance she had imaged between her lowly bringing up and the courtly breeding and graces of Leucippus. Hers was no raging flame, such as had burned destructive in the bosom of poor Hidaspes. Either the vindictive God in mercy had spared this young maiden, or the wrath of the confounding *Cupid* was restrained by a Higher Power from discharging the most malignant of his arrows against the peace of so much innocence. Of the extent of her mother's malice she was too guileless to have entertained conjecture ; but from hints and whispers, and, above all, from that tender watchfulness with which a true affection, like Urania's, tends the safety of its object—fearing even where no cause for fear subsists—she gathered that some danger was impending over the Prince, and with simple heroism resolved to countermine the treason.

It chanced upon a day that Leucippus had been indulging his sad meditations, in forests far from human converse, when he was struck with the appearance of a human being, so unusual in that solitude. There stood before him a seeming *youth*, of delicate appearance, clad in coarse and peasantly attire. 'He was come', he said, 'to seek out the Prince, and to be his poor boy and servant, if he would let him.' 'Alas! poor youth,' replied Leucippus, 'why

do you follow me, who am as poor as you are ?' 'In good faith,' was his pretty answer, 'I shall be well and rich enough if you will but love me.' And saying so, he wept. The Prince, admiring this strange attachment in a boy, was moved with compassion; and seeing him exhausted, as if with long travel and hunger, invited him into his poor habitation, setting such refreshments before him as that barren spot afforded. But by no entreaties could he be prevailed upon to take sustenance; and all that day, and for the two following, he seemed supported only by some gentle flame of love that was within him. He fed only upon the sweet looks and courteous entertainment which he received from Leucippus. Seemingly he wished to die under the loving eyes of his master. 'I cannot eat,' he prettily said, 'but I shall eat to-morrow.' 'You will be dead by that time,' said Leucippus. 'I shall be well then,' said he, 'since you will not love me.' Then the Prince asked him why he sighed so: 'To think,' was his innocent reply, 'that such a fine man as you should die, and no gay lady love him.' 'But you will love me,' said Leucippus. 'Yes, sure,' said he, 'till I die; and when I am in heaven I shall wish for you.'—'This is a love,' thought the other, 'that I never yet heard tell of: but come, thou art sleepy, child; go in, and I will sit with thee.' Then, from some words which the poor youth dropped, Leucippus, suspecting that his wits were beginning to ramble, said, 'What portends this ?'—'I am not sleepy,' said the youth, 'but you are sad. I would that I could do any thing to make you merry. Shall I sing ?' But soon, as if recovering strength, 'There is one approaching,' he wildly cried out. 'Master, look to yourself—'

His words were true; for now entered, with provided weapon, the wicked emissary of Bacha that we told of; and, directing a mortal thrust at the Prince, the supposed boy, with a last effort, interposing his weak body, received it in his bosom, thanking the Heavens in death that he had saved 'so good a master'.

Leucippus, having slain the villain, was at leisure to discover, in the features of his poor servant, the countenance of his devoted sister-in-law! Through solitary and dangerous ways she had sought him in that disguise;

and, finding him, seems to have resolved upon a voluntary death by fasting: partly, that she might die in the presence of her beloved; and partly, that she might make known to him in death the love which she wanted boldness to disclose to him while living; but chiefly, because she knew that by her demise all obstacles would be removed that stood between her Prince and his succession to the throne of Lycia.

Leucippus had hardly time to comprehend the strength of love in his Urania when a trampling of horses resounded through his solitude. It was a party of Lycian horsemen, that had come to seek him, dragging the detested Bacha in their train, who was now to receive the full penalty of her misdeeds. Amidst her frantic fury upon missing of her daughter the old Duke had suddenly died, not without suspicion of her having administered poison to him. Her punishment was submitted to Leucippus, who was now, with joyful acclaims, saluted as the rightful Duke of Lycia. He, as no way moved with his great wrongs, but considering her simply as the parent of Urania, saluting her only by the title of 'Wicked Mother', bade her to live. 'That reverend title', he said, and pointed to the bleeding remains of her child, 'must be her pardon. He would use no extremity against her, but leave her to Heaven.' The hardened mother, not at all relenting at the sad spectacle that lay before her, but making show of dutiful submission to the young Duke, and with bended knees approaching him, suddenly, with a dagger, inflicted a mortal stab upon him; and, with a second stroke stabbing herself, ended both their wretched lives.

Now was the tragedy of Cupid's wrath awfully completed; and, the race of Leontius failing in the deaths of both his children, the chronicle relates that, under their new Duke, Ismenus, the offense to the angry Power was expiated; his statues and altars were, with more magnificence than ever, re-edified; and he ceased thenceforth from plaguing the land.

Thus far the Pagan historians relate erring. But from this vain Idol story a not unprofitable moral may be gathered against the abuse of the natural, but dangerous, *passion of love*. In the story of Hidaspes we see the preposterous

linking of beauty with deformity ; of princely expectancies with mean and low conditions, in the case of the Prince, her brother ; and of decrepit age with youth in the ill end of their doting father, Leontius. By their examples we are warned to decline all *unequal and ill-assorted unions.*

ELIA

[In a letter, dated July 30, 1821, to John Taylor, senior partner in the firm of Taylor and Hessey, Publishers, of Fleet St., Lamb relates the circumstances under which he came to adopt the *nom de guerre* of Elia. 'The fact is, a person of that name, an Italian, was a fellow clerk of mine at the South-Sea House, thirty (not forty) years ago . . . but had left it like myself many years; and I having a brother now there, and doubting how he might relish certain descriptions in it, I clapt down the name of Elia to it, which passed off pretty well . . . I went the other day (not having seen him for a year) to laugh over with him at my usurpation of his name, and found him, alas! no more than a name, for he died . . . eleven months ago . . . so the name has fairly devolved to me, I think . . .'

In the course of a playful retort to *Elia's* humorous vindication of his identity (PS. to *A Chapter on Ears, L. M.*, Mar. 1821—see Editor's Notes) published in *The Indicator*, no. lxxiv, p. 176 (Mar. 7, 1821), Leigh Hunt observes: 'There *was*, by the bye, a family of the name of Elia who came from Italy,—Jews.' The name seems to have been pronounced *Ell-i-a*, as Hone rimes it with 'desire,' and in a sonnet by some 'Indian Chaplain' unknown, written apparently about the middle of the last century, the last line runs: 'Hark! they are calling—doth Elia linger?' (Bertram Dobell, *Sidelights on C. L.*, p. 357).

When the collected essays were about to appear (Dec. 1822), Lamb wrote to the publisher (Dec. 7, 1822):—

'Dear Sir,—I should like the enclosed Dedication to be printed, unless you dislike it. I like it. It is in the olden style. But if you object to it, put forth the book as it is; only pray don't let the printer mistake the word *curt* for *curst*.

'C. L.

'DEDICATION.

'To the Friendly and Judicious Reader,

who will take these Papers, as they were meant; not understanding every thing perversely in its absolute and literal sense, but giving fair construction, as to an after-dinner conversation; allowing for the rashness and necessary incompleteness of first thoughts; and not remembering, for the purpose of an after taunt, words spoken peradventure after the fourth glass, the Author wishes (what he would will for himself) plenty of good friends to stand by him, good books to solace him, prosperous events to all his honest undertakings, and a candid interpretation to his most hasty words and actions. The other sort (and

he hopes many of them will purchase his book too) he greets with the curt invitation of Timon, "Uncover, dogs, and lap": or he dismisses them with the confident security of the philosopher,—"you beat but on the case of Elia."

'On better consideration, pray omit that Dedication. The Essays want no Preface: they are *all Preface*. A Preface is nothing but a talk with the reader; and they do nothing else. Pray omit it.

'There will be a [1]sort of Preface in the next Magazine, which may act as an advertisement, but not proper for the volume.

'Let ELIA come forth bare as he was born.

'C. L.

'N.B.—*No* Preface.']

THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE

[Printed under the title, *Recollections of the South-Sea House*, in *The London Magazine*, vol. ii, no. viii, p. 142 (August, 1820). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

READER, in thy passage from the Bank—where thou hast been receiving thy half-yearly dividends (supposing thou art a lean annuitant like myself)—to the Flower Pot, to secure a place for Dalston, or Shacklewell, or some other thy suburban retreat northerly,—didst thou never observe a melancholy looking, handsome, brick and stone edifice, to the left—where Threadneedle-street abuts upon Bishopsgate? I dare say thou hast often admired its magnificent portals ever gaping wide, and disclosing to view a grave court, with cloisters and pillars, with few or no traces of goers-in or comers-out—a desolation something like Balclutha's.[a]

This was once a house of trade,—a centre of busy interests. The throng of merchants was here—the quick pulse of gain—and here some forms of business are still kept up, though the soul be long since fled. Here are still to be seen stately porticos; imposing staircases; offices roomy as the state apartments in palaces—deserted, or thinly peopled with a few straggling clerks; the still more sacred interiors of court and committee rooms, with venerable faces of beadles, door-keepers—directors seated in form on solemn days (to proclaim a dead dividend,) at long worm-eaten tables, that have been mahogany, with tarnished gilt-leather coverings,

[a] I passed by the walls of Balclutha, and they were desolate.—OSSIAN.

[1] *See Editor's Notes:* CHARACTER OF THE LATE ELIA.

supporting massy silver inkstands long since dry ;—the oaken wainscots hung with pictures of deceased governors and sub-governors, of Queen Anne, and the two first monarchs of the Brunswick dynasty ;—huge charts, which subsequent discoveries have antiquated ;—dusty maps of Mexico, dim as dreams,—and soundings of the Bay of Panama !—The long passages hung with buckets, appended in idle rows, to walls, whose substance might defy any, short of the last, conflagration :—with vast ranges of cellarage under all, where dollars and pieces of eight once lay, an ' unsunned heap ', for Mammon to have solaced his solitary heart withal,—long since dissipated, or scattered into air at the blast of the breaking of that famous BUBBLE.——

Such is the SOUTH-SEA HOUSE. At least, such it was forty years ago, when I knew it,—a magnificent relic ! What alterations may have been made in it since, I have had no opportunities of verifying. Time, I take for granted, has not freshened it. No wind has resuscitated the face of the sleeping waters. A thicker crust by this time stagnates upon it. The moths, that were then battening upon its obsolete ledgers and day-books, have rested from their depredations, but other light generations have succeeded, making fine fretwork among their single and double entries. Layers of dust have accumulated (a superfœtation of dirt !) upon the old layers, that seldom used to be disturbed, save by some curious finger, now and then, [1]inquisitive to explore the mode of bookkeeping in Queen Anne's reign ; or, with less hallowed curiosity, [2]seeking to unveil some of the mysteries of that tremendous HOAX, whose extent the petty peculators of our day look back upon with the same expression of incredulous admiration, and hopeless ambition of rivalry, as would become the puny face of modern conspiracy contemplating the Titan size of Vaux's superhuman plot.

Peace to the manes of the BUBBLE ! Silence and destitution are upon thy walls, proud house, for a memorial !

Situated as thou art, in the very heart of stirring and living commerce,—amid the fret and fever of speculation—with the Bank, and the 'Change, and the India-house about

[1] inquisitive] that wished 1820. [2] seeking] sought 1820.

thee, in the hey-day of present prosperity, with their important faces, as it were, insulting thee, their *poor neighbour out of business*—to the idle and merely contemplative,—to such as me, old house ! there is a charm in thy quiet :—a cessation—a coolness from business—an indolence almost cloistral—which is delightful ! With what reverence have I paced thy great bare rooms and courts at eventide ! They spoke of the past :—the shade of some dead accountant, with visionary pen in ear, would flit by me, stiff as in life. Living accounts and accountants puzzle me. I have no skill in figuring. But thy great dead tomes, which scarce three degenerate clerks of the present day could lift from their enshrining shelves—with their old fantastic flourishes and decorative rubric interlacings—their sums in triple columniations, set down with formal superfluity of cyphers—with pious sentences at the beginning, without which our religious ancestors never ventured to open a book of business, or bill of lading—the costly vellum covers of some of them almost persuading us that we are got into some *better library*,—are very agreeable and edifying spectacles. I can look upon these defunct dragons with complacency. Thy heavy odd-shaped ivory-handled penknives (our ancestors had every thing on a larger scale than we have hearts for) are as good as any thing from Herculaneum. The pounce-boxes of our days have gone retrograde.

The very clerks which I remember in the South-Sea House—I speak of forty years back—had an air very different from those in the public offices that I have had to do with since. They partook of the genius of the place !

They were mostly (for the establishment did not admit of superfluous salaries) bachelors. Generally (for they had not much to do) persons of a curious and speculative turn of mind. Old-fashioned, for a reason mentioned before. Humorists, for they were of all descriptions ; and, not having been brought together in early life (which has a tendency to assimilate the members of corporate bodies to each other), but, for the most part, placed in this house in ripe or middle age, they necessarily carried into it their separate habits and oddities, unqualified, if I may so speak, as into a common stock. Hence they formed a sort of

Noah's ark. Odd fishes. A lay-monastery. Domestic retainers in a great house, kept more for show than use. Yet pleasant fellows, full of chat—and not a few among them had arrived at considerable proficiency on the German flute.

The cashier at that time was one Evans, a Cambro-Briton. He had something of the choleric complexion of his countrymen stamped on his [1]visage, but was a worthy sensible man at bottom. He wore his hair, to the last, powdered and frizzed out, in the fashion which I remember to have seen in caricatures of what were termed, in my young days, *Maccaronies*. He was the last of that race of beaux. Melancholy as a gib-cat over his counter all the forenoon, I think I see him, making up his cash (as they call it) with tremulous fingers, as if he feared every one about him was a defaulter; in his hypochondry ready to imagine himself one; haunted, at least, with the idea of the possibility of his becoming one: his tristful visage clearing up a little over his roast neck of veal at Anderton's at two (where his picture still hangs, taken a little before his death by desire of the master of the coffee-house, which he had frequented for the last five-and-twenty years), but not attaining the meridian of its animation till evening brought on the hour of tea and visiting. The simultaneous sound of his well-known rap at the door with the stroke of the clock announcing six, was a topic of never-failing mirth in the families which this dear old bachelor gladdened with his presence. Then was his *forte*, his glorified hour! How would he chirp, and expand, over a muffin! How would he dilate into secret history! His countryman, Pennant himself, in particular, could not be more eloquent than he in relation to old and new London—the site of old theatres, churches, streets gone to decay—where Rosamond's pond stood—the Mulberry-gardens—and the Conduit in Cheap—with many a pleasant anecdote, derived from paternal tradition, of those grotesque figures which Hogarth has immortalized in his picture of *Noon*,—the worthy descendants of those historic confessors, who, flying to this country, from the wrath of Louis the Fourteenth and his dragoons, kept alive the flame of pure religion in the sheltering

[1] visage] visnomy 1820.

obscurities of Hog-lane, and the vicinity of the Seven Dials!

Deputy, under Evans, was Thomas Tame. He had the air and stoop of a nobleman. You would have taken him for one, had you met him in one of the passages leading to Westminster-hall. By stoop, I mean that gentle bending of the body forwards, which, in great men, must be supposed to be the effect of an habitual condescending attention to the applications of their inferiors. While he held you in converse, you felt strained to the height in the colloquy. The conference over, you were at leisure to smile at the comparative insignificance of the pretensions which had just awed you. His intellect was of the shallowest order. It did not reach to a saw or a proverb. His mind was in its original state of white paper. A sucking babe might have posed him. What was it then? Was he rich? Alas, no! Thomas Tame was very poor. Both he and his wife looked outwardly gentlefolks, when I fear all was not well at all times within. She had a neat meagre person, which it was evident she had not sinned in over-pampering; but in its veins was noble blood. She traced her descent, by some labyrinth of relationship, which I never thoroughly understood,—much less can explain with any heraldic certainty at this time of day,—to the illustrious, but unfortunate house of Derwentwater. This was the secret of Thomas's stoop. This was the thought—the sentiment—the bright solitary star of your lives,—ye mild and happy pair,—which cheered you in the night of intellect, and in the obscurity of your station! This was to you instead of riches, instead of rank, instead of glittering attainments: and it was worth them all together. You insulted none with it; but, while you wore it as a piece of defensive armour only, no insult likewise could reach you through it. *Decus et solamen.*

Of quite another stamp was the then accountant, John Tipp. He neither pretended to high blood, nor in good truth cared one fig about the matter. He 'thought an accountant the greatest character in the world, and himself the greatest accountant in it'. Yet John was not without his hobby. The fiddle relieved his vacant hours. He sang, certainly, with other notes than to the Orphean lyre. He

did, indeed, scream and scrape most abominably. His fine suite of official rooms in Threadneedle-street, which without any thing very substantial appended to them, were enough to enlarge a man's notions of himself that lived in them, (I know not who is the occupier of them [a]now) resounded fortnightly to the notes of a concert of 'sweet breasts', as our ancestors would have called them, culled from club-rooms and orchestras—chorus singers—first and second violoncellos—double basses—and clarionets—who ate his cold mutton, and drank his punch, and praised his ear. He sate like Lord Midas among them. But at the desk Tipp was quite another sort of creature. Thence all ideas, that were purely ornamental, were banished. You could not speak of any thing romantic without rebuke. Politics were excluded. A newspaper was thought too refined and abstracted. The whole duty of man consisted in writing off dividend warrants. The striking of the annual balance in the company's books (which, perhaps, differed from the balance of last year in the sum of 25*l*. 1*s*. 6*d*.) occupied his days and nights for a month previous. Not that Tipp was blind to the deadness of *things* (as they call them in the city) in his beloved house, or did not sigh for a return of the old stirring days when South Sea hopes were young—(he was indeed equal to the wielding of any the most intricate accounts of the most flourishing company in these or those days) :—but to a genuine accountant the difference of proceeds is as nothing. The fractional farthing is as dear to his heart as the thousands which stand before it. He is the true actor, who, whether his part be a prince or a peasant, must act it with like intensity. With Tipp form was every thing. His life was formal. His actions seemed ruled with a ruler. His pen was not less erring than his heart. He made the best executor in the world : he was plagued with incessant executorships accordingly, which excited his spleen and soothed his vanity in equal ratios. He would swear (for Tipp swore) at the little

[a] I have since been informed, that the present tenant of them is a Mr. Lamb, a gentleman who is happy in the possession of some choice pictures, and among them a rare portrait of Milton, which I mean to do myself the pleasure of going to see, and at the same time to refresh my memory with the sight of old scenes. Mr. Lamb has the character of a right courteous and communicative collector.—*Footnote*, 1820 only.

orphans, whose rights he would guard with a tenacity like the grasp of the dying hand, that commended their interests to his protection. With all this there was about him a sort of timidity—(his few enemies used to give it a worse name)—a something which, in reverence to the dead, we will place, if you please, a little on this side of the heroic. Nature certainly had been pleased to endow John Tipp with a sufficient measure of the principle of self-preservation. There is a cowardice which we do not despise, because it has nothing base or treacherous in its elements; it betrays itself, not you: it is mere temperament; the absence of the romantic and the enterprising; it sees a lion in the way, and will not, with Fortinbras, 'greatly find quarrel in a straw,' when some supposed honour is at stake. Tipp never mounted the box of a stage-coach in his life; or leaned against the rails of a balcony; or walked upon the ridge of a parapet; or looked down a precipice; or let off a gun; or went upon a water-party; or would willingly let you go if he could have helped it: neither was it recorded of him, that for lucre, or for intimidation, he ever forsook friend or principle.

Whom next shall we summon from the dusty dead, in whom common qualities become uncommon? Can I forget thee, Henry Man, the wit, the polished man of letters, the *author*, of the South-Sea House? who never enteredst thy office in a morning, or quittedst it in mid-day—(what didst *thou* in an office?)—without some quirk that left a sting! Thy gibes and thy jokes are now extinct, or survive but in two forgotten volumes, which I had the good fortune to rescue from a stall in Barbican, not three days ago, and found thee terse, fresh, epigrammatic, as alive. Thy wit is a little gone by in these fastidious days—thy topics are staled by the 'new-born gauds' of the time:—but great thou used to be in Public Ledgers, and in Chronicles, upon Chatham, and Shelburne, and Rockingham, and Howe, and Burgoyne, and Clinton, and the war which ended in the tearing from Great Britain her rebellious colonies,—and Keppel, and Wilkes, and Sawbridge, and Bull, and Dunning, and Pratt, and Richmond,—and such small politics.—

A little less facetious, and a great deal more obstreperous,

was fine rattling, rattleheaded Plumer. He was descended, —not in a right line, reader, (for his lineal pretensions, like his personal, favoured a little of the sinister bend) from the Plumers of Hertfordshire. So tradition gave him out; and certain family features not a little sanctioned the opinion. Certainly old Walter Plumer (his reputed author) had been a rake in his days, and visited much in Italy, and had seen the world. He was uncle, bachelor-uncle, to the fine old whig still living, who has represented the county in so many successive parliaments, and has a fine old mansion near Ware. Walter flourished in George the Second's days, and was the same who was summoned before the House of Commons about a business of franks, with the old Duchess of Marlborough. You may read of it in Johnson's Life of Cave. Cave came off cleverly in that business. It is certain our Plumer did nothing to discountenance the rumour. He rather seemed pleased whenever it was, with all gentleness, insinuated. But, besides his family pretensions, Plumer was an engaging fellow, and sang gloriously.—

Not so sweetly sang Plumer as thou sangest, mild, child-like, pastoral [1]M—; a flute's breathing less divinely whispering than thy Arcadian melodies, when, in tones worthy of Arden, thou didst chant that song sung by Amiens to the banished Duke, which proclaims the winter wind more lenient than for a man to be ungrateful. Thy sire was old surly M—, the unapproachable churchwarden of Bishopsgate. He knew not what he did, when he begat thee, like spring, gentle offspring of blustering winter :— only unfortunate in thy ending, which should have been mild, conciliatory, swan-like.—

Much remains to sing. Many fantastic shapes rise up, but they must be mine in private :—already I have fooled the reader to the top of his bent ;—else could I omit that strange creature Woollett, who existed in trying the question, and *bought litigations ?*—and still stranger, inimitable solemn Hepworth, from whose gravity Newton might have deduced the law of gravitation. How profoundly would he nib a pen—with what deliberation would he wet a wafer !—

[1] *See Editor's Notes.*

But it is time to close—night's wheels are rattling fast over me—it is proper to have done with this solemn mockery.

Reader, what if I have been playing with thee all this while—peradventure the very *names*, which I have summoned up before thee, are fantastic—insubstantial—like Henry Pimpernel, and old John Naps of Greece :—

Be satisfied that something answering to them has had a being. Their importance is from the past.

OXFORD IN THE VACATION

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. ii, no. x, p. 365 (October, 1820). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

Casting a preparatory glance at the bottom of this article—as the wary connoisseur in prints, with cursory eye (which, while it reads, seems as though it read not,) never fails to consult the *quis sculpsit* in the corner, before he pronounces some rare piece to be a Vivares, or a Woollet —methinks I hear you exclaim, Reader, *Who is Elia ?*

Because in my last I tried to divert thee with some half-forgotten humours of some old clerks defunct, in an old house of business, long since gone to decay, doubtless you have already set me down in your mind as one of the self-same college—a votary of the desk—a notched and cropt scrivener—one that sucks his sustenance, as certain sick people are said to do, through a quill.

Well, I do agnize something of the sort. I confess that it is my humour, my fancy—in the forepart of the day, when the mind of your man of letters requires some relaxation—(and none better than such as at first sight seems most abhorrent from his beloved studies)—to while away some good hours of my time in the contemplation of indigos, cottons, raw silks, piece-goods, flowered or otherwise. In the first place * * * * * * * and then it sends you home with such increased appetite to your books * * * * * not to say, that your outside sheets, and waste wrappers of foolscap, do receive into them, most kindly and naturally, the impression of sonnets, epigrams, *essays*—so that the very parings of a counting-house are, in some sort, the settings up of an author. The enfranchised quill, that has

plodded all the morning among the cart-rucks of figures and cyphers, frisks and curvets so at its ease over the flowery carpet-ground of a midnight dissertation.—It feels its promotion. * * * * * So that you see, upon the whole, the literary dignity of *Elia* is very little, if at all, compromised in the condescension.

Not that, in my anxious detail of the many commodities incidental to the life of a public office, I would be thought blind to certain flaws, which a cunning carper might be able to pick in this Joseph's vest. And here I must have leave, in the fulness of my soul, to regret the abolition, and doing-away-with altogether, of those consolatory interstices, and sprinklings of freedom, through the four seasons,—the *red-letter days*, now become, to all intents and purposes, *dead-letter days*. There was Paul, and Stephen, and Barnabas—

Andrew and John, men famous in old times

—we were used to keep all their days holy, as long back as I was at school at Christ's. I remember their effigies, by the same token, in the old *Baskett* Prayer Book. There hung Peter in his uneasy posture—holy Bartlemy in the troublesome act of flaying, after the famous Marsyas by Spagnoletti.—I honoured them all, and could almost have wept the defalcation of Iscariot—so much did we love to keep holy memories sacred :—only methought I a little grudged at the coalition of the *better Jude* with Simon—clubbing (as it were) their sanctities together, to make up one poor gaudy-day between them—as an economy unworthy of the dispensation.

These were bright visitations in a scholar's and a clerk's life—'far off their coming shone.'—I was as good as an almanac in those days. I could have told you such a saint's-day falls out next week, or the week after. Peradventure the Epiphany, by some periodical infelicity, would, once in six years, merge in a Sabbath. Now am I little better than one of the profane. Let me not be thought to arraign the wisdom of my civil superiors, who have judged the further observation of these holy tides to be papistical, superstitious. Only in a custom of such long standing, methinks, if their Holinesses the Bishops had, in decency, been first sounded

——but I am wading out of my depths. I am not the man to decide the limits of civil and ecclesiastical authority—— I am plain Elia—no Selden, nor Archbishop Usher—though at present in the thick of their books, here in the heart of learning, under the shadow of the mighty Bodley.

I can here play the gentleman, enact the student. To such a one as myself, who has been defrauded in his young years of the sweet food of academic institution, nowhere is so pleasant, to while away a few idle weeks at, as one or other of the Universities. Their vacation, too, at this time of the year, falls in so pat with *ours*. Here I can take my walks unmolested, and fancy myself of what degree or standing I please. I seem admitted *ad eundem*. I fetch up past opportunities. I can rise at the chapel-bell, and dream that it rings for *me*. In moods of humility I can be a Sizar, or a Servitor. When the peacock vein rises, I strut a Gentleman Commoner. In graver moments, I proceed Master of Arts. Indeed I do not think I am much unlike that respectable character. I have seen your dim-eyed vergers, and bed-makers in spectacles, drop a bow or curtsy, as I pass, wisely mistaking me for something of the sort. I go about in black, which favours the notion. Only in Christ Church reverend quadrangle, I can be content to pass for nothing short of a seraphic Doctor.

The walks at these times are so much one's own,—the tall trees of Christ's, the groves of Magdalen! The halls deserted, and with open doors, inviting one to slip in unperceived, and pay a devoir to some Founder, or noble or royal Benefactress (that should have been ours) whose portrait seems to smile upon their over-looked beadsman, and to adopt me for their own. Then, to take a peep in by the way at the butteries, and sculleries, redolent of antique hospitality: the immense caves of kitchens, kitchen fireplaces, cordial recesses; ovens whose first pies were baked four centuries ago; and spits which have cooked for Chaucer! Not the meanest minister among the dishes but is hallowed to me through his imagination, and the Cook goes forth a Manciple.

Antiquity! thou wondrous charm, what art thou? that, being nothing, art every thing! When thou *wert*, thou wert not antiquity—then thou wert nothing, but hadst

a remoter *antiquity*, as thou called'st it, to look back to with blind veneration ; thou thyself being to thyself flat, jejune, *modern !* What mystery lurks in this retroversion ? or what half Januses[a] are we, that cannot look forward with the same idolatry with which we for ever revert ! The mighty future is as nothing, being every thing ! the past is every thing, being nothing !

What were thy *dark ages ?* Surely the sun rose as brightly then as now, and man got him to his work in the morning. Why is it that we can never hear mention of them without an accompanying feeling, as though a palpable obscure had dimmed the face of things, and that our ancestors wandered to and fro groping !

Above all thy rarities, old Oxenford, what do most arride and solace me, are thy repositories of mouldering learning, thy shelves——

What a place to be in is an old library ! It seems as though all the souls of all the writers, that have bequeathed their labours to these Bodleians, were reposing here, as in some dormitory, or middle state. I do not want to handle, to profane the leaves, their winding-sheets. I could as soon dislodge a shade. I seem to inhale learning, walking amid their foliage ; and the odour of their old moth-scented coverings is fragrant as the first bloom of those sciential apples which grew amid the happy orchard.

Still less have I curiosity to disturb the elder repose of MSS. Those *variæ lectiones*, so tempting to the more erudite palates, do but disturb and unsettle my [1]faith. I am no Herculanean raker. The credit of the three witnesses might have slept unimpeached for me. I leave these curiosities to Porson, and to [2]G. D.—whom, by the way, I found busy as a moth over some rotten archive, rummaged out of some seldom-explored press, in a nook at Oriel. With long poring, he is grown almost into a book. He stood as passive as one by the side of the old shelves. I longed to new-coat him in Russia, and assign him his place. He might have mustered for a tall Scapula.

D. is assiduous in his visits to these seats of learning. No inconsiderable portion of his moderate fortune, I appre-

[a] Januses of one face.—Sir Thomas Browne.

[1] *See Editor's Notes.* [2] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

hend, is consumed in journeys between them and Clifford's-inn——where, like a dove on the asp's nest, he has long taken up his unconscious abode, amid an incongruous assembly of attorneys, attorneys' clerks, apparitors, promoters, vermin of the law, among whom he sits, ' in calm and sinless peace.' The fangs of the law pierce him not—the winds of litigation blow over his humble chambers—the hard sheriff's officer moves his hat as he passes—legal nor illegal discourtesy touches him—none thinks of offering violence or injustice to [1]him—you would as soon ' strike an abstract idea '.

D. has been engaged, he tells me, through a course of laborious years, in an investigation into all curious matter connected with the two Universities ; and has lately hit upon a MS. collection of charters, relative to C——, by which he hopes to settle some disputed points—particularly that long controversy between them as to priority of foundation. The ardor with which he engages in these liberal pursuits, I am afraid, has not met with all the encouragement it deserved, either here, or at C——. Your caputs, and heads of colleges, care less than any body else about these questions.—Contented to suck the milky fountains of their Alma Maters, without inquiring into the venerable gentlewomen's years, they rather hold such curiosities to be impertinent—unreverend. They have their good glebe lands *in manu*, and care not much to rake into the title-deeds. I gather at least so much from other sources, for D. is not a man to complain.

D. started like an unbroke heifer, when I interrupted him. *A priori* it was not very probable that we should have met in Oriel. But D. would have done the same, had I accosted him on the sudden in his own walks in Clifford's-inn, or in the Temple. In addition to a provoking short-sightedness (the effect of late studies and watchings at the midnight oil) D. is the most absent of men. He made a call the other morning at our friend *M.*'s in Bedford-square ; and, finding nobody at home, was ushered into the hall, where, asking for pen and ink, with great exactitude of purpose he enters me his name in the book—which ordinarily lies about in such places, to record the failures

[1] *See Editor's Notes.*

of the untimely or unfortunate visitor—and takes his leave with many ceremonies, and professions of regret. Some two or three hours after, his walking destinies returned him into the same neighbourhood again, and again the quiet image of the fire-side circle at *M.*'s—Mrs. *M.* presiding at it like a Queen Lar, with pretty *A. S.* at her side—striking irresistibly on his fancy, he makes another call (forgetting that they were 'certainly not to return from the country before that day week') and disappointed a second time, inquires for pen and paper as before: again the book is brought, and in the line just above that in which he is about to print his second name (his re-script)—his first name (scarce dry) looks out upon him like another Sosia, or as if a man should suddenly encounter his own duplicate!—The effect may be conceived. D. made many a good resolution against any such lapses in future. I hope he will not keep them too rigorously.

For with G. D.—to be absent from the body, is sometimes (not to speak it profanely) to be present with the Lord. At the very time when, personally encountering thee, he passes on with no recognition——or, being stopped, starts like a thing surprised—at that moment, reader, he is on Mount Tabor—or Parnassus—or co-sphered with Plato—or, with Harrington, framing 'immortal commonwealths'—devising some plan of amelioration to thy country, or thy species——peradventure meditating some individual kindness or courtesy, to be done to *thee thyself*, the returning consciousness of which made him to start so guiltily at [1]thy obtruded personal presence.

D. is delightful any where, but he is at the best in such places as these. He cares not much for Bath. He is out of his element at Buxton, at Scarborough, or Harrowgate. The Cam and the Isis are to him 'better than all the waters of Damascus'. On the Muses' hill he is happy, and good, as one of the Shepherds on the Delectable Mountains; and when he goes about with you to show you the halls and colleges, you think you have with you the Interpreter at the House [2]Beautiful.

[1] *See Editor's Notes for two paragraphs* (1820) *here omitted.* [2] *In* 1820 *this essay is dated at the end:* '*Aug. 5th,* 1820. *From my rooms facing the Bodleian.*'

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE AND THIRTY YEARS AGO

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In Mr. Lamb's 'Works', published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school,[a] such as it was, or now appears to him to have been, between the years 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own standing at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his; and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember L. at school; and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his schoolfellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand; and he had the privilege of going to see them, almost as often as he wished, through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. The present worthy sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple can explain how that happened. He had his tea and hot rolls in a morning, while we were battening upon our quarter of a penny loaf—our *crug*—moistened with attenuated small beer, in wooden piggins, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porritch, blue and tasteless, and the pease soup of Saturday, coarse and choking, were enriched for him with a slice of 'extraordinary bread and butter', from the hot-loaf of the Temple. The Wednesday's mess of millet, somewhat less repugnant—(we had three banyan to four meat days in the week)—was endeared to his palate with a lump of double-refined, and a smack of ginger (to make it go down the more glibly) or the fragrant cinnamon. In lieu of our *half-pickled* Sundays, or *quite fresh* boiled beef on Thursdays (strong as *caro equina*), with detestable marigolds floating in the pail to poison the broth—our scanty mutton crags on Fridays—and rather more savoury, but grudging, portions of the same flesh, rotten-roasted or rare, on the Tuesdays (the only dish which

[a] Recollections of Christ's Hospital.

excited our appetites, and disappointed our stomachs, in almost equal proportion)—he had his hot plate of roast veal, or the more tempting griskin (exotics unknown to our palates), cooked in the paternal kitchen (a great thing), and brought him daily by his maid or aunt! I remember the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride) squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the Tishbite); and the contending passions of L. at the unfolding. There was love for the bringer; shame for the thing brought, and the manner of its bringing; sympathy for those who were too many to share in it; and, at top of all, hunger (eldest, strongest of the passions!) predominant, breaking down the stony fences of shame, and awkwardness, and a troubling over-consciousness.

I was a poor friendless boy. My parents, and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates.

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years! How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and faces! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire!

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from the haunting memory of those *whole-day-leaves*, when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out, for the live-long day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to, or none. I remember those bathing-excursions to the New-River, which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can—for he was a home-

seeking lad, and did not much care for such water-pastimes : —How merrily we would sally forth into the fields ; and strip under the first warmth of the sun ; and wanton like young dace in the streams ; getting us appetites for noon, which those of us that were pennyless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying—while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us, and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings—the very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them !—How faint and languid, finally, we would return, towards nightfall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired !

It was worse in the days of winter, to go prowling about the streets objectless—shivering at cold windows of print-shops, to extract a little amusement ; or haply, as a last resort, in the hope of a little novelty, to pay a fifty-times repeated visit (where our individual faces should be as well known to the warden as those of his own charges) to the Lions in the Tower—to whose levée, by courtesy immemorial, we had a prescriptive title to admission.

L.'s governor (so we called the patron who presented us to the foundation) lived in a manner under his paternal roof. Any complaint which he had to make was sure of being attended to. This was understood at Christ's, and was an effectual screen to him against the severity of masters, or worse tyranny of the monitors. The oppressions of these young brutes are heart-sickening to call to recollection. I have been called out of my bed, and *waked for the purpose*, in the coldest winter nights—and this not once, but night after night—in my shirt, to receive the discipline of a leathern thong, with eleven other sufferers, because it pleased my [1]callow overseer, when there has been any talking heard after we were gone to bed, to make the six last beds in the dormitory, where the youngest children of us slept, answerable for an offence they neither dared to commit, nor had the power to hinder.—The same execrable tyranny drove the younger part of us from the fires, when our feet were perishing with snow ; and, under the cruelest penalties, forbad the indulgence of a drink of

[1] callow] callous 1820.

water, when we lay in sleepless summer nights, fevered with the season, and the day's sports.

There was one [1]H——, who, I learned, in after days, was seen expiating some maturer offence in the hulks (Do I flatter myself in fancying that this might be the planter of that name, who suffered—at Nevis, I think, or St. Kits,—some few years since? My friend Tobin was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red hot iron; and nearly starved forty of us, with exacting contributions, to the one half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse's daughter (a young flame of his) he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the leads of the *ward*, as they called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat—happier than Caligula's minion, could he have kept his own counsel—but, foolisher, alas! than any of his species in the fables—waxing fat, and kicking, in the fulness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below; and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram's horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho) set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to Smithfield; but I never understood that the patron underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L.'s admired Perry.

Under the same *facile* administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses used to carry away openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practised in that magnificent apartment, which L. (grown connoisseur since, we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings 'by Verrio, and others', with which it is 'hung round and adorned'. But the sight of sleek well-fed blue-coat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

carried away before our faces by harpies; and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido)

To feed our mind with idle portraiture.

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to *gags*, or the fat of fresh beef boiled; and sets it down to some superstition. But these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fat-haters) and in strong, coarse, boiled meats, *unsalted*, are detestable. A *gag-eater* in our time was equivalent to a *goul*, and held in equal detestation. —— suffered under the imputation.

——— 'Twas said
He ate strange flesh.

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remnants left at his table (not many, nor very choice fragments, you may credit me)—and, in an especial manner, these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bed-side. None saw when he ate them. It was rumoured that he privately devoured them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such midnight practices were discoverable. Some reported, that, on leave-days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spake to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated; put out of the pale of the school. He was too powerful a boy to be beaten, but he underwent every mode of that negative punishment, which is more grievous than many stripes. Still he persevered. At length he was observed by two of his schoolfellows, who were determined to get at the secret, and had traced him one leave-day for that purpose, to enter a large worn-out building, such as there exist specimens of in Chancery-lane, which are let out to various scales of pauperism with open door, and a common staircase. After him they silently slunk in, and followed by stealth up four flights, and saw him tap at a poor wicket, which was opened by an aged woman, meanly clad. Suspicion was now ripened into certainty.

The informers had secured their victim. They had him in their toils. Accusation was formally preferred, and retribution most signal was looked for. Mr. Hathaway the then steward (for this happened a little after my time), with that patient sagacity which tempered all his conduct, determined to investigate the matter, before he proceeded to sentence. The result was, that the supposed mendicants, the receivers or purchasers of the mysterious scraps, turned out to be the parents of ——, an honest couple come to decay,—whom this seasonable supply had, in all probability, saved from mendicancy ; and that this young stork, at the expense of his own good name, had all this while been only feeding the old birds !—The governors on this occasion, much to their honour, voted a present relief to the family of ——, and presented him with a silver medal. The lesson which the steward read upon RASH JUDGMENT, on the occasion of publicly delivering the medal to ——, I believe, would not be lost upon his auditory.—I had left school then, but I well remember ——. He was a tall, shambling youth, with a cast in his eye, not at all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself, as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad ; and the sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven ; and had only read of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had *run away*. This was the punishment for the first offence.—As a novice I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little, square, Bedlam cells, where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket—a mattress, I think, was afterwards substituted—with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison-orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water—who *might not speak to him ;*—or of the beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which was almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude :—and

here he was shut up by himself *of nights*, out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves, and superstition incident to his time of life, might subject him to.[a] This was the penalty for the second offence.—Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree ?

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was at this time deemed irreversible, was brought forth, as at some solemn *auto da fe*, arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire—all trace of his late 'watchet weeds' carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket, resembling those which London lamplighters formerly delighted in, with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frighted features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante had seized upon him. In this disguisement he was brought into the hall (*L.'s favourite state-room*), where awaited him the whole number of his school-fellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was thenceforth to share no more ; the awful presence of the steward, to be seen for the last time ; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion ; and of two faces more, of direr import, because never but in these extremities visible. These were governors ; two of whom, by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these *Ultima Supplicia ;* not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the uttermost stripe. Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, I remember, were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attending to the previous

[a] One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide, accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture to the spirits was dispensed with.—This fancy of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard's brain ; for which (saving the reverence due to Holy Paul) methinks, I could willingly [1]spit upon his statue.

[1] spit upon his statue] 'spit upon his stony gaberdine' 1820.

[1]disgusting circumstances, to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made over, in his *San Benito*, to his friends, if he had any (but commonly such poor runagates were friendless), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so often as to spoil the general mirth of the community. We had plenty of exercise and recreation *after* school hours; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier, than *in* them. The Upper and the Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds. Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer was the Upper Master; but the Rev. Matthew Field presided over that portion of the apartment, of which I had the good fortune to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just what we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried an accidence, or a grammar, for form; but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we had learned about them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Field never used the rod; and in truth he wielded the cane with no great good will—holding it 'like a dancer'. It looked in his hands rather like an emblem than an instrument of authority; and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but often staid away whole days from us; and when he came, it made no difference to us—he had his private room to retire to, the short time he staid, to be out of the sound of our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to 'insolent Greece or haughty

[1] disgusting circumstances] *disguising circumstances* 1820.

Rome', that passed current among us—Peter Wilkins—the Adventures of the Hon. Capt. Robert Boyle—the Fortunate Blue Coat Boy—and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic or scientific operations; making little sun-dials of paper; or weaving those ingenious parentheses, called *cat-cradles;* or making dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin pipe; or studying the art military over that laudable game 'French and English', and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time—mixing the useful with the agreeable—as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Field belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the *gentleman*, the *scholar*, and the *Christian;* but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the composition. He was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly bow at some episcopal levée, when he should have been attending upon us. He had for many years the classical charge of a hundred children, during the four or five first years of their education; and his very highest form seldom proceeded further than two or three of the introductory fables of Phædrus. How things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses, always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference, send to borrow a rod of the Under Master, and then, with Sardonic grin, observe to one of his upper boys, 'how neat and fresh the twigs looked.' While his pale students were battering their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoined by the Samite, we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us; his storms came near, but never touched us; contrary to Gideon's miracle, while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry.[a] His

[a] Cowley.

boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Field comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a 'playing holiday'.

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus. B. was a rabid pedant. His English style was crampt to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scrannel pipes.[a]—He would laugh, ay, and heartily, but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex*——or at the *tristis severitas in vultu*, or *inspicere in patinas*, of Terence—thin jests, which at their first broaching could hardly have had *vis* enough to move a Roman muscle.—He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of differing omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old discoloured, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer.—J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his knotty fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a 'Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?'—Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the schoolroom, from his inner recess, or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, 'Od's my life, Sirrah,' (his favourite adjuration) 'I have a great mind to whip you,'—then, with as sudden a retracting impulse, fling back into his lair—and, after a

[a] In this and every thing B. was the antipodes of his co-adjutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F. would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of Vertumnus and Pomona, is not yet forgotten by the chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction.—B. used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was *too classical for representation*

cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell—'*and I* WILL, *too.*'—In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor* was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, at the same time ; a paragraph, and a lash between ; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall ineffectual from his hand—when droll squinting W—— having been caught putting the inside of the master's desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that *he did not know that the thing had been forewarned.* This exquisite irrecognition of any law antecedent to the *oral* or *declaratory*, struck so irresistibly upon the fancy of all who heard it (the pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L. has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. Coleridge, in his *Literary Life*, has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium on them. The author of the *Country Spectator* doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better than with the pious ejaculation of C— when he heard that his old master was on his death-bed—'Poor J. B. !—may all his faults be forgiven ; and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys, all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities.'

Under him were many good and sound scholars bred.—First Grecian of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since Co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with [1]Dr. T——e. What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the anti-socialities of their predecessors ! —You never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm in arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it convenient to retire, the other was not long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same arm linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to turn over the *Cicero De Amicitia*, or some tale of Antique Friendship, which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate!—Co-Grecian with S. was Th—, who has since executed with ability various diplomatic functions at the Northern courts. Th— was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing of speech, with raven locks. —Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta) a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He has the reputation of an excellent critic; and is author (besides the Country Spectator) of a Treatise on the Greek Article, against Sharpe.—M. is said to bear his mitre high in India, where the *regni novitas* (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility quite as primitive as that of Jewel or Hooker might not be exactly fitted to impress the minds of those Anglo-Asiatic diocesans with a reverence for home institutions, and the church which those fathers watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild, and unassuming.—Next to M. (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the Aboriginal Britons, the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems; a pale, studious Grecian.—Then followed poor [1]S——, ill-fated M——! of these the Muse is silent.

> Finding some of Edward's race
> Unhappy, pass their annals by.

Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee—the dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard!—How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, intranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young Mirandula), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

(for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar——while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy !*—Many were the ' wit-combats ', (to dally awhile with the words of old Fuller,) between him and C. V. Le G——, ' which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon, and an English man of war ; Master Coleridge, like the former, was built far higher in learning, solid, but slow in his performances. C. V. L., with the English man of war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.'

Nor shalt thou, their compeer, be quickly forgotten, Allen, with the cordial smile, and still more cordial laugh, with which thou wert wont to make the old Cloisters shake, in thy cognition of some poignant jest of theirs ; or the anticipation of some more material, and, peradventure, practical one, of thine own. Extinct are those smiles, with that beautiful countenance, with which (for thou wert the *Nireus formosus* of the school), in the days of thy maturer waggery, thou didst disarm the wrath of infuriated town-damsel, who, incensed by provoking pinch, turning tigress-like round, suddenly converted by thy angel-look, exchanged the half-formed terrible ' *bl*—— ', for a gentler greeting—' *bless thy handsome face !* '

Next follow two, who ought to be now alive, and the friends of Elia—the junior Le G—— and F—— ; who impelled, the former by a roving temper, the latter by too quick a sense of neglect—ill capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are sometimes subject to in our seats of learning—exchanged their Alma Mater for the camp ; perishing, one by climate, and one on the plains of Salamanca :—Le G——, sanguine, volatile, sweet-natured ; F——, dogged, faithful, anticipative of insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old Roman height about him.

Fine, frank-hearted [1]Fr——, the present master of Hertford, with Marmaduke T——, mildest of Missionaries —and both my good friends still—close the catalogue of Grecians in my time.

[1] *See Editor's Note on ' The South-Sea House '.*

THE TWO RACES OF MEN

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THE human species, according to the best theory I can form of it, is composed of two distinct races, *the men who borrow*, and *the men who lend*. To these two original diversities may be reduced all those impertinent classifications of Gothic and Celtic tribes, white men, black men, red men. All the dwellers upon earth, 'Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites,' flock hither, and do naturally fall in with one or other of these primary distinctions. The infinite superiority of the former, which I choose to designate as the *great race*, is discernible in their figure, port, and a certain instinctive sovereignty. The latter are born degraded. 'He shall serve his brethren.' There is something in the air of one of this cast, lean and suspicious; contrasting with the open, trusting, generous manners of the other.

Observe who have been the greatest borrowers of all ages—Alcibiades—Falstaff—Sir Richard Steele—our late incomparable Brinsley—what a family likeness in all four!

What a careless, even deportment hath your borrower! what rosy gills! what a beautiful reliance on Providence doth he manifest,—taking no more thought than lilies! What contempt for money,—accounting it (yours and mine especially) no better than dross. What a liberal confounding of those pedantic distinctions of *meum* and *tuum!* or rather, what a noble simplification of language (beyond Tooke), resolving these supposed opposites into one clear, intelligible pronoun adjective!—What near approaches doth he make to the primitive *community*,—to the extent of one half of the principle at least!—

He is the true taxer who 'calleth all the world up to be taxed'; and the distance is as vast between him and *one of us*, as subsisted betwixt the Augustan Majesty and the poorest obolary Jew that paid it tribute-pittance at Jerusalem!—His exactions, too, have such a cheerful, voluntary air! So far removed from your sour parochial or state-gatherers,—those ink-horn varlets, who carry

their want of welcome in their faces! He cometh to you with a smile, and troubleth you with no receipt; confining himself to no set season. Every day is his Candlemas, or his Feast of Holy Michael. He applieth the *lene tormentum* of a pleasant look to your purse,—which to that gentle warmth expands her silken leaves, as naturally as the cloak of the traveller, for which sun and wind contended! He is the true Propontic which never ebbeth! The sea which taketh handsomely at each man's hand. In vain the victim, whom he delighteth to honour, struggles with destiny; he is in the net. Lend therefore cheerfully, O man ordained to lend—that thou lose not in the end, with thy worldly penny, the reversion promised. Combine not preposterously in thine own person the penalties of Lazarus and of Dives!—but, when thou seest the proper authority coming, meet it smilingly, as it were half-way. Come, a handsome sacrifice! See how light *he* makes of it! Strain not courtesies with a noble enemy.

Reflections like the foregoing were forced upon my mind by the death of my old friend, Ralph Bigod, Esq., who departed this life on Wednesday evening; dying, as he had lived, without much trouble. He boasted himself a descendant from mighty ancestors of that name, who heretofore held ducal dignities in this realm. In his actions and sentiments he belied not the stock to which he pretended. Early in life he found himself invested with ample revenues; which, with that noble disinterestedness which I have noticed as inherent in men of the *great race*, he took almost immediate measures entirely to dissipate and bring to nothing: for there is something revolting in the idea of a king holding a private purse; and the thoughts of Bigod were all regal. Thus furnished, by the very act of disfurnishment; getting rid of the cumbersome luggage of riches, more apt (as one sings)

> To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
> Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise;

he set forth, like some Alexander, upon his great enterprise, 'borrowing and to borrow'!

In his periegesis, or triumphant progress throughout this island, it has been calculated that he laid a tythe part of the inhabitants under contribution. I reject this estimate

as greatly exaggerated :—but having had the honour of accompanying my friend, divers times, in his perambulations about this vast city, I own I was greatly struck at first with the prodigious number of faces we met, who claimed a sort of respectful acquaintance with us. He was one day so obliging as to explain the phenomenon. It seems, these were his tributaries ; feeders of his exchequer ; gentlemen, his good friends (as he was pleased to express himself), to whom he had occasionally been beholden for a loan. Their multitudes did no way disconcert him. He rather took a pride in numbering them ; and, with Comus, seemed pleased to be ' stocked with so fair a herd '.

With such sources, it was a wonder how he contrived to keep his treasury always empty. He did it by force of an aphorism, which he had often in his mouth, that ' money kept longer than three days stinks '. So he made use of it while it was fresh. A good part he drank away (for he was an excellent toss-pot), some he gave away, the rest he threw away, literally tossing and hurling it violently from him—as boys do burrs, or as if it had been infectious, —into ponds, or ditches, or deep holes,—inscrutable cavities of the earth ;—or he would bury it (where he would never seek it again) by a river's side under some bank, which (he would facetiously observe) paid no interest—but out away from him it must go peremptorily, as Hagar's offspring into the wilderness, while it was sweet. He never missed it. The streams were perennial which fed his fisc. When new supplies became necessary, the first person that had the felicity to fall in with him, friend or stranger, was sure to contribute to the deficiency. For Bigod had an *undeniable* way with him. He had a cheerful, open exterior, a quick jovial eye, a bald forehead, just touched with grey (*cana fides*). He anticipated no excuse, and found none. And, waiving for a while my theory as to the *great race*, I would put it to the most untheorising reader, who may at times have disposable coin in his pocket, whether it is not more repugnant to the kindliness of his nature to refuse such a one as I am describing, than to say *no* to a poor petitionary rogue (your bastard borrower) who, by his mumping visnomy, tells you, that he expects nothing better ; and, therefore, whose preconceived notions

and expectations you do in reality so much less shock in the refusal.

When I think of this man; his fiery glow of heart; his swell of feeling; how magnificent, how *ideal* he was; how great at the midnight hour; and when I compare with him the companions with whom I have associated since, I grudge the saving of a few idle ducats, and think that I am fallen into the society of *lenders*, and *little men*.

To one like Elia, whose treasures are rather cased in leather covers than closed in iron coffers, there is a class of alienators more formidable than that which I have touched upon; I mean your *borrowers of books*—those mutilators of collections, spoilers of the symmetry of shelves, and creators of odd volumes. There is Comberbatch, matchless in his depredations!

That foul gap in the bottom shelf facing you, like a great eye-tooth knocked out—(you are now with me in my little back study in Bloomsbury, reader!)——with the huge Switzer-like tomes on each side (like the Guildhall giants, in their reformed posture, [1]guardant of nothing) once held the tallest of my folios, *Opera Bonaventuræ*, choice and massy divinity, to which its two supporters (school divinity also, but of a lesser calibre,—Bellarmine, and Holy Thomas), showed but as dwarfs,—itself an Ascapart!—*that* Comberbatch abstracted upon the faith of a theory he holds, which is more easy, I confess, for me to suffer by than to refute, namely, that 'the title to property in a book (my Bonaventure, for instance), is in exact ratio to the claimant's powers of understanding and appreciating the same'. Should he go on acting upon this theory, which of our shelves is safe?

The slight vacuum in the left-hand case—two shelves from the ceiling—scarcely distinguishable but by the quick eye of a loser—was whilom the commodious resting-place of Browne on Urn Burial. C. will hardly allege that he knows more about that treatise than I do, who introduced it to him, and was indeed the first (of the moderns) to discover its beauties—but so have I known a foolish lover to praise his mistress in the presence of a rival more qualified to carry her off than himself.—Just below,

[1] guardant] guarding 1820.

Dodsley's dramas want their fourth volume, where Vittoria Corombona is! The remainder nine are as distasteful as Priam's refuse sons, when the Fates *borrowed* Hector. Here stood the Anatomy of Melancholy, in sober state.—There loitered the Complete Angler; quiet as in life, by some stream side.—In yonder nook, John Buncle, a widower-volume, with 'eyes closed', mourns his ravished mate.

One justice I must do my friend, that if he sometimes, like the sea, sweeps away a treasure, at another time, sea-like, he throws up as rich an equivalent to match it. I have a small under-collection of this nature (my friend's gatherings in his various calls), picked up, he has forgotten at what odd places, and deposited with as little memory at mine. I take in these orphans, the twice-deserted. These proselytes of the gate are welcome as the true Hebrews. There they stand in conjunction; natives, and naturalised. The latter seem as little disposed to inquire out their true lineage as I am.—I charge no ware-house-room for these deodands, nor shall ever put myself to the ungentlemanly trouble of advertising a sale of them to pay expenses.

To lose a volume to C. carries some sense and meaning in it. You are sure that he will make one hearty meal on your viands, if he can give no account of the platter after it. But what moved thee, wayward, spiteful [1]K., to be so importunate to carry off with thee, in spite of tears and adjurations to thee to forbear, the Letters of that princely woman, the thrice noble Margaret Newcastle?—knowing at the time, and knowing that I knew also, thou most assuredly wouldst never turn over one leaf of the illustrious folio:—what but the mere spirit of contradiction, and childish love of getting the better of thy friend?—Then, worst cut of all! to transport it with thee to the Gallican land—

> Unworthy land to harbour such a sweetness,
> A virtue in which all ennobling thoughts dwelt,
> Pure thoughts, kind thoughts, high thoughts, her sex's wonder!

——hadst thou not thy play-books, and books of jests and fancies, about thee, to keep thee merry, even as thou keepest all companies with thy quips and mirthful tales?—

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

Child of the Green-room, it was unkindly done of thee. Thy wife, too, that part-French, better-part Englishwoman!—that *she* could fix upon no other treatise to bear away, in kindly token of remembering us, than the works of Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke—of which no Frenchman, nor woman of France, Italy, or England, was ever by nature constituted to comprehend a tittle! *Was there not Zimmerman on Solitude?*

Reader, if haply thou art blessed with a moderate collection, be shy of showing it; or if thy heart overfloweth to lend them, lend thy books; but let it be to such a one as [1]S. T. C.—he will return them (generally anticipating the time appointed) with usury; enriched with annotations, tripling their value. I have had experience. Many are these precious MSS. of his—(in *matter* oftentimes, and almost in *quantity* not unfrequently, vying with the originals)—in no very clerky hand—legible in my Daniel; in old Burton; in Sir Thomas Browne; and those abstruser cogitations of the Greville, now, alas! wandering in Pagan lands.—I counsel thee, shut not thy heart, nor thy library, [2]against S. T. C.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. iii, no. xiii, p. 5 (Jan., 1821). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

Every man hath two birth-days: two days, at least, in every year, which set him upon revolving the lapse of time, as it affects his mortal duration. The one is that which in an especial manner he termeth *his*. In the gradual desuetude of old observances, this custom of solemnizing our proper birth-day hath nearly passed away, or is left to children, who reflect nothing at all about the matter, nor understand any thing in it beyond cake and orange. But the birth of a New Year is of an interest too wide to be pretermitted by king or cobbler. No one ever regarded the First of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time, and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam.

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.* [2] against] from 1820.

Of all sounds of all bells—(bells, the music nighest bordering upon heaven)—most solemn and touching is the peal which rings out the Old Year. I never hear it without a gathering-up of my mind to a concentration of all the images that have been diffused over the past twelvemonth; all I have done or suffered, performed or neglected—in that regretted time. I begin to know its worth, as when a person dies. It takes a personal colour; nor was it a poetical flight in a contemporary, when he exclaimed—

I saw the skirts of the departing Year.

It is no more than what in sober sadness every one of us seems to be conscious of, in that awful leave-taking. I am sure I felt it, and all felt it with me, last night; though some of my companions affected rather to manifest an exhilaration at the birth of the coming year, than any very tender regrets for the decease of its predecessor. But I am none of those who—

Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

I am naturally, beforehand, shy of novelties; new books, new faces, new years,—from some mental twist which makes it difficult in me to face the prospective. I have almost ceased to hope; and am sanguine only in the prospects of other (former) years. I plunge into foregone visions and conclusions. I encounter pell-mell with past disappointments. I am armour-proof against old discouragements. I forgive, or overcome in fancy, old adversaries. I play over again *for love*, as the gamesters phrase it, games, for which I once paid so dear. I would scarce now have any of those untoward accidents and events of my life reversed. I would no more alter them than the incidents of some well-contrived novel. Methinks, it is better that I should have pined away seven of my goldenest years, when I was thrall to the fair hair, and fairer eyes, of [1]Alice W——n, than that so passionate a love-adventure should be lost. It was better that our family should have missed that legacy, which old Dorrell cheated us of, than that I should have at this moment two thousand pounds

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

in banco, and be without the idea of that specious old rogue.

In a degree beneath manhood, it is my infirmity to look back upon those early days. Do I advance a paradox, when I say, that, skipping over the intervention of forty years, a man may have leave to love *himself*, without the imputation of self-love ?

If I know aught of myself, no one whose mind is introspective—and mine is painfully so—can have a less respect for his present identity, than I have for the man Elia. I know him to be light, and vain, and humorsome ; a notorious [1]* * * ; addicted to * * * * : averse from counsel, neither taking it, nor offering it ;—* * * besides ; a stammering buffoon ; what you will ; lay it on, and spare not ; I subscribe to it all, and much more, than thou canst be willing to lay at his door ——— but for the child Elia—that ' other me ', there, in the back-ground—I must take leave to cherish the remembrance of that young master—with as little reference, I protest, to this stupid changeling of five-and-forty, as if it had been a child of some other house, and not of my parents. I can cry over its patient small-pox at five, and rougher medicaments. I can lay its poor fevered head upon the sick pillow at Christ's, and wake with it in surprise at the gentle posture of maternal tenderness hanging over it, that unknown had watched its [2]sleep. I know how it shrank from any the least colour of falsehood.—God help thee, Elia, how art thou changed ! Thou art sophisticated.—I know how honest, how courageous (for a weakling) it was—how religious, how imaginative, how hopeful ! From what have I not fallen, if the child I remember was indeed myself,—and not some dissembling guardian, presenting a false identity, to give the rule to my unpractised steps, and regulate the tone of my moral being !

That I am fond of indulging, beyond a hope of sympathy, in such retrospection, may be the symptom of some sickly idiosyncrasy. Or is it owing to another cause ; simply, that being without wife or family, I have not learned to project myself enough out of myself ; and having no off-

[1] *See Editor's Note on ' The South-Sea House '.* [2] sleep] sleeps 1820.

spring of my own to dally with, I turn back upon memory, and adopt my own early idea, as my heir and favourite ? If these speculations seem fantastical to thee, reader—(a busy man, perchance), if I tread out of the way of thy sympathy, and am singularly-conceited only, I retire, impenetrable to ridicule, under the phantom cloud of Elia.

The elders, with whom I was brought up, were of a character not likely to let slip the sacred observance of any old institution ; and the ringing out of the Old Year was kept by them with circumstances of peculiar ceremony. —In those days the sound of those midnight chimes, though it seemed to raise hilarity in all around me, never failed to bring a train of pensive imagery into my fancy. Yet I then scarce conceived what it meant, or thought of it as a reckoning that concerned me. Not childhood alone, but the young man till thirty, never feels practically that he is mortal. He knows it indeed, and, if need were, he could preach a homily on the fragility of life ; but he brings it not home to himself, any more than in a hot June we can appropriate to our imagination the freezing days of December. But now, shall I confess a truth ?—I feel these audits but too powerfully. I begin to count the probabilities of my duration, and to grudge at the expenditure of moments and shortest periods, like miser's farthings. In proportion as the years both lessen and shorten, I set more count upon their periods, and would fain lay my ineffectual finger upon the spoke of the great wheel. I am not content to pass away ' like a weaver's shuttle '. Those metaphors solace me not, nor sweeten the unpalatable draught of mortality. I care not to be carried with the tide, that smoothly bears human life to eternity ; and reluct at the inevitable course of destiny. I am in love with this green earth ; the face of town and country ; the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. I would set up my tabernacle here. I am content to stand still at the age to which I am arrived ; I, and my friends : to be no younger, no richer, no handsomer. I do not want to be weaned by age ; or drop, like mellow fruit, as they say, into the grave.—Any alteration, on this earth of mine, in diet or in lodging, puzzles and discomposes me. My household-gods plant a terrible fixed foot, and are not

rooted up without blood. They do not willingly seek Lavinian shores. A new state of being staggers me.

Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and fire-side conversations, and innocent vanities, and jests, and *irony itself*—do these things go out with life ?

Can a ghost laugh, or shake his gaunt sides, when you are pleasant with him ?

And you, my midnight darlings, my Folios ! must I part with the intense delight of having you (huge armfuls) in my embraces ? Must knowledge come to me, if it comes at all, by some awkward experiment of intuition, and no longer by this familiar process of reading ?

Shall I enjoy friendships there, wanting the smiling indications which point me to them here,—the recognisable face—the ' sweet assurance of a look '— ?

In winter this intolerable disinclination to dying—to give it its mildest name—does more especially haunt and beset me. In a genial August noon, beneath a sweltering sky, death is almost problematic. At those times do such poor snakes as myself enjoy an immortality. Then we expand and burgeon. Then are we as strong again, as valiant again, as wise again, and a great deal taller. The blast that nips and shrinks me, puts me in thoughts of death. All things allied to the insubstantial, wait upon that master feeling ; cold, numbness, dreams, perplexity, moonlight itself, with its shadowy and spectral appearances —that cold ghost of the sun, or Phœbus' sickly sister, like that innutritious one denounced in the Canticles :—I am none of her minions—I hold with the Persian.

Whatsoever thwarts, or puts me out of my way, brings death into my mind. All partial evils, like humours, run into that capital plague-sore.—I have heard some profess an indifference to life. Such hail the end of their existence as a port of refuge ; and speak of the grave as of some soft arms, in which they may slumber as on a pillow. Some have wooed death ——— but out upon thee, I say, thou foul, ugly phantom ! I detest, abhor, execrate, and (with Friar John) give thee to six-score thousand devils,

as in no instance to be excused or tolerated, but shunned as a universal viper; to be branded, proscribed, and spoken evil of! In no way can I be brought to digest thee, thou thin, melancholy *Privation*, or more frightful and confounding *Positive!*

Those antidotes, prescribed against the fear of thee, are altogether frigid and insulting, like thyself. For what satisfaction hath a man, that he shall 'lie down with kings and emperors in death', who in his life-time never greatly coveted the society of such bed-fellows?—or, forsooth, that 'so shall the fairest face appear?'—why, to comfort me, must Alice W——n be a goblin? More than all, I conceive disgust at those impertinent and misbecoming familiarities, inscribed upon your ordinary tombstones. Every dead man must take upon himself to be lecturing me with his odious truism, that 'such as he now is, I must shortly be'. Not so shortly, friend, perhaps, as thou imaginest. In the meantime I am alive. I move about. I am worth twenty of thee. Know thy betters! Thy New Years' Days are past. I survive, a jolly candidate for 1821. Another cup of wine—and while that turn-coat bell, that just now mournfully chanted the obsequies of 1820 departed, with changed notes lustily rings in a successor, let us attune to its peal the song made on a like occasion, by hearty, cheerful Mr. Cotton.—

THE NEW YEAR

HARK, the cock crows, and yon bright star
Tells us, the day himself's not far;
And see where, breaking from the night,
He gilds the western hills with light.
With him old Janus doth appear,
Peeping into the future year,
With such a look as seems to say,
The prospect is not good that way
Thus do we rise ill sights to see,
And 'gainst ourselves to prophesy;
When the prophetic fear of things
A more tormenting mischief brings,
More full of soul-tormenting gall,
Than direst mischiefs can befall.
But stay! but stay! methinks my sight,
Better inform'd by clearer light,

Discerns sereneness in that brow,
That all contracted seem'd but now.
[a]His revers'd face may show distaste,
And frown upon the ills are past;
But that which this way looks is clear,
And smiles upon the New-born Year.
He looks too from a place so high,
The Year lies open to his eye;
And all the moments open are
To the exact discoverer.
Yet more and more he smiles upon
The happy revolution.
Why should we then suspect or fear
The influences of a year,
So smiles upon us the first morn,
And speaks us good so soon as born?
Plague on't! the last was ill enough,
This cannot but make better proof;
Or, at the worst, as we brush'd through
The last, why so we may this too;
And then the next in season shou'd
Be superexcellently good;
For the worst ills (we daily see)
Have no more perpetuity,
Than the best fortunes that do fall;
Which also bring us wherewithal
Longer their being to support,
Than those do of the other sort:
And who has one good year in three,
And yet repines at destiny,
Appears ungrateful in the case,
And merits not the good he has.
Then let us welcome the New Guest
With lusty brimmers of the best;
Mirth always should Good Fortune meet,
And renders e'en Disaster sweet:
And though the Princess turn her back,
Let us but line ourselves with sack,
We better shall by far hold out,
Till the next Year she face about.

How say you, reader—do not these verses smack of the rough magnanimity of the old English vein? Do they not fortify like a cordial; enlarging the heart, and productive of sweet blood, and generous spirits, in the concoction? Where be those puling fears of death, just now expressed or affected?—Passed like a cloud—absorbed in the purging sunlight of clear poetry—clean washed away by a wave

[a] Janus. [1820 *only*.]

of genuine Helicon, your only Spa for these hypochondries —And now another cup of the generous! and a merry New Year, and many of them, to you all, my [1]masters!

MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST.

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. iii, no. xiv, p. 161 (Feb., 1821). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

'A CLEAR fire, a clean [a]hearth, and the rigour of the game.' This was the celebrated *wish* of old Sarah Battle (now with God) who, next to her devotions, loved a good game at whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half-and-half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game, and lose [b]another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no; and will desire an adversary, who has slipt a wrong card, to take it up and play another. These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said, that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul; and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated favours. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight: cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) 'like a dancer'. She sate bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side

[a] This was before the introduction of rugs, reader. You must remember the intolerable crash of the unswept cinder, betwixt your foot and the marble [1821 *only*].

[b] As if a sportsman should tell you, he liked to kill a fox one day, and lose him the next [1821 *only*].

[1] *In* 1820 *this essay is dated* '1st Jan., 1821'.

—their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that Hearts was her favourite suit.

I never in my life—and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it—saw her take out her snuff-box when it was her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced, or connived at, miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards: and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candour, declared, that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do,—and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards—over a book.

Pope was her favourite author: his Rape of the Lock her favourite work. She once did me the favour to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that poem; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, tradrille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles: but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners—a thing which the constancy of whist abhors;—the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille—absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of whist, where his crown and garter give him no proper power above his brother-nobility of the Aces;—the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone:—above all, the overpowering attractions of a *Sans Prendre Vole*,—to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing

parallel or approaching, in the contingencies of whist ;—all these, she would say, make quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But whist was the *solider* game : that was her word. It was a long meal ; not, like quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Machiavel ; perpetually changing postures and connexions ; bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow ; kissing and scratching in a breath ;—but the wars of whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational, antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favourite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage—nothing superfluous, No *flushes*—that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up :—that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and colour, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves ! She held this to be a solecism ; as pitiful an ambition at cards as alliteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colours of things,—Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have a uniformity of array to distinguish them : but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit from dressing up his tenantry in red jackets, that never were to be marshalled—never to take the field ?—She even wished that whist were more simple than it is ; and, in my mind, would have stript it of some appendages, which, in the state of human frailty, may be venially, and even commendably allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps ?—Why two colours, when the mark of the suits would have sufficiently distinguished them without it ?—

'But the eye, my dear Madam, is agreeably refreshed with the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason—

he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your quaker spirit of unsensualizing would have kept out.—You, yourself, have a pretty collection of paintings—but confess to me, whether, walking in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the ante-room, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to *that* you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court cards ?—the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession—the gay triumph-assuring scarlets —the contrasting deadly-killing sables—the "hoary majesty of spades"—Pam in all his glory !—

'All these might be dispensed with ; and, with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, picture-less. But the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling.—Imagine a dull deal board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature's), fittest arena for those courtly combatants to play their gallant jousts and turneys in !—Exchange those delicately-turned ivory markers—(work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol,—or as profanely slighting their true application as the arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess)—exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors' money) or chalk and a slate ! '—

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic ; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favourite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted for the legacy of a curious cribbage board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated) brought with him from Florence :—this, and a trifle of five hundred pounds, came to me at her death.

The former bequest (which I do not least value) I have kept with religious care ; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say,—disputing

with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She could never heartily bring her mouth to pronounce '*go*'—or '*that's a go.*' She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five dollar stake), because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring [1]'*two for his heels*'. There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms—such as pique—repique—the capot—they savoured (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She loved the quadrate, or square. She would argue thus :—Cards are warfare : the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war, in disguise of a sport : when single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves, it is too close a fight ; with spectators, it is not much bettered. No looker on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money ; he cares not for your luck *sympathetically*, or for your play.—Three are still worse ; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance ; or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in tradrille.—But in square games (*she meant whist*) all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honour, common to every species—though the *latter* can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in whist are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold—or even an interested—by-stander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathises in the

[1] two] one 1821.

contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing to two are better reconciled, than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels. War becomes a civil game.—By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favourite pastime.

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game, where chance entered into the composition, *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue—and here again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion!—chance is nothing, but where something else depends upon it. It is obvious, that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up size ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spectators, where no stake was depending?—Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number—and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize?—Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in backgammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory, they were a mere setting of one man's wit,—his memory, or combination-faculty rather—against another's; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless.—She could not conceive a *game* wanting the spritely infusion of chance,—the handsome excuses of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room, whilst whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with insufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of Castles, and Knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue, (and I think in this case justly) were entirely misplaced and senseless. Those hard head-contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and colour. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad [1]passions, she would retort, that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other:—that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards; that cards are a temporary illusion; in truth, a mere drama; for we do but *play* at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake, yet, during the illusion, we *are* as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling, and little bloodshed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *games* of life, which men play, without esteeming them to be such.——

[2]With great deference to the old lady's judgment on these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life, when playing at cards *for nothing* has even been agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet *for love* with my cousin Bridget—Bridget Elia.

I grant there is something sneaking in it; but with a tooth-ache, or a sprained ancle,—when you are subdued and humble,—you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick whist*.—

I grant it is not the highest style of man—I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle—she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologise.—

At such times, those *terms* which my old friend objected to, come in as something admissible.—I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted her)—(dare I tell thee, how foolish I am?)—I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we gained nothing, and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would

[1] passions, she] passions,—(dropping for a while the speaking mask of old Sarah Battle) I 1821. [2] With] P.S. With 1821.

be content to go on in that idle folly for ever. The pipkin should be ever boiling, that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over: and, as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

A CHAPTER ON EARS

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. iii, no. xv, p. 263 (March, 1821). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

I HAVE no ear.—

Mistake me not, reader,—nor imagine that I am by nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments, and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me.—I am, I think, rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those ingenious labyrinthine inlets—those indispensable side-intelligencers.

Neither have I incurred, or done any thing to incur, with Defoe, that hideous disfigurement, which constrained him to draw upon assurance—to feel '[a] quite unabashed,' and at ease upon that article. I was never, I thank my stars, in the pillory; nor, if I read them aright, is it within the compass of my destiny, that I ever should be.

When therefore I say that I have no ear, you will understand me to mean—*for music*.—To say that this heart never melted at the concourse of sweet sounds, would be a foul self-libel.—'*Water parted from the sea*' never fails to move it strangely. So does '*In Infancy*.' But they were used to be sung at her harpsichord (the old-fashioned instrument in vogue in those days) by a gentlewoman—the gentlest, sure, that ever merited the appellation—the sweetest—why should I hesitate to name [1]Mrs. S——, once the blooming Fanny Weatheral of the Temple—who

[a] Earless on high stood, unabash'd, Defoe,—Dunciad [1821 *only*].

[1] *See Editor's Note on* '*The South-Sea House*'.

had power to thrill the soul of Elia, small imp as he was, even in his long coats; and to make him glow, tremble, and blush with a passion, that not faintly indicated the day-spring of that absorbing sentiment, which was afterwards destined to overwhelm and subdue his nature quite, for Alice W——n.

I even think that *sentimentally* I am disposed to harmony. But *organically* I am incapable of a tune. I have been practising '*God save the King*' all my life; whistling and humming of it over to myself in solitary corners; and am not yet arrived, they tell me, within many quavers of it. Yet hath the loyalty of Elia never been impeached.

I am not without suspicion, that I have an undeveloped faculty of music within me. For, thrumming, in my wild way, on my friend A.'s piano, the other morning, while he was engaged in an adjoining parlour,—on his return he was pleased to say, '*he thought it could not be the maid!*' On his first surprise at hearing the keys touched in somewhat an airy and masterful way, not dreaming of me, his suspicions had lighted on *Jenny*. But a grace, snatched from a superior refinement, soon convinced him that some being,—technically perhaps deficient, but higher informed from a principle common to all the fine arts,—had swayed the keys to a mood which Jenny, with all her (less-cultivated) enthusiasm, could never have elicited from them. I mention this as a proof of my friend's penetration, and not with any view of disparaging Jenny.

Scientifically I could never be made to understand (yet have I taken some pains) what a note in music is; or how one note should differ from another. Much less in voices can I distinguish a soprano from a tenor. Only sometimes the thorough bass I contrive to guess at, from its being supereminently harsh and disagreeable. I tremble, however, for my misapplication of the simplest terms of *that* which I disclaim. While I profess my ignorance, I scarce know what to *say* I am ignorant of. I hate, perhaps, by misnomers. *Sostenuto* and *adagio* stand in the like relation of obscurity to me; and *Sol, Fa, Mi, Re,* is as conjuring as *Baralipton.*

It is hard to stand alone—in an age like this,—(constituted to the quick and critical perception of all

harmonious combinations, I verily believe, beyond all preceding ages, since Jubal stumbled upon the gamut)—to remain, as it were, singly unimpressible to the magic influences of an art, which is said to have such an especial stroke at soothing, elevating, and refining the passions.—Yet rather than break the candid current of my confessions, I must avow to you, that I have received a great deal more pain than pleasure from this so cried-up faculty.

I am constitutionally susceptible of noises. A carpenter's hammer, in a warm summer noon, will fret me into more than midsummer madness. But those unconnected, unset sounds are nothing to the measured malice of music. The ear is passive to those single strokes; willingly enduring stripes, while it hath no task to con. To music it cannot be passive. It will strive—mine at least will—'spite of its inaptitude, to thrid the maze; like an unskilled eye painfully poring upon hieroglyphics. I have sat through an Italian Opera, till, for sheer pain, and inexplicable anguish, I have rushed out into the noisiest places of the crowded streets, to solace myself with sounds, which I was not obliged to follow, and get rid of the distracting torment of endless, fruitless, barren attention! I take refuge in the unpretending assemblage of honest common-life sounds;—and the purgatory of the Enraged Musician becomes my paradise.

I have sat at an Oratorio (that profanation of the purposes of the cheerful playhouse) watching the faces of the auditory in the pit (what a contrast to Hogarth's Laughing Audience!) immoveable, or affecting some faint emotion,—till (as some have said, that our occupations in the next world will be but a shadow of what delighted us in this) I have imagined myself in some cold Theatre in Hades, where some of the *forms* of the earthly one should be kept up, with none of the *enjoyment;* or like that—

——Party in a parlour,
All silent, and all DAMNED!

Above all, those insufferable concertos, and pieces of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension.—Words are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a dying, to lie stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up languor

by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar, and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze on empty frames, and be forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book, *all stops*, and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore tragedies to answer to the vague gestures of an inexplicable rambling mime—these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this empty *instrumental music*.

I deny not, that in the opening of a concert, I have experienced something vastly lulling and agreeable:—afterwards followeth the languor, and the oppression. Like that disappointing book in [a]Patmos; or, like the comings on of melancholy, described by Burton, doth music make her first insinuating approaches:—'Most pleasant it is to such as are melancholy given, to walk alone in some solitary grove, betwixt wood and water, by some brook side, and to meditate upon some delightsome and pleasant subject, which shall affect him most, *amabilis insania*, and *mentis gratissimus error*. A most incomparable delight to build castles in the air, to go smiling to themselves, acting an infinite variety of parts, which they suppose, and strongly imagine, they act, or that they see done.—So delightsome these toys at first, they could spend whole days and nights without sleep, even whole years in such contemplations, and fantastical meditations, which are like so many dreams, and will hardly be drawn from them—winding and unwinding themselves as so many clocks, and still pleasing their humours, until at last the SCENE TURNS UPON A SUDDEN, and they being now habitated to such meditations and solitary places, can endure no company, can think of nothing but harsh and distasteful subjects. Fear, sorrow, suspicion, *subrusticus pudor*, discontent, cares, and weariness of life, surprise them on a sudden, and they can think of nothing else: continually suspecting, no sooner are their eyes open, but this infernal plague of melancholy seizeth on them, and terrifies their souls, representing some dismal object to their minds; which now, by no means, no labour, no

[a] Rev. chap. x, ver. 10 [1821 *only*].

persuasions they can avoid, they cannot be rid of it, they cannot [a]resist.'

Something like this 'SCENE-TURNING' I have experienced at the evening parties, at the house of my good Catholic friend *Nov*——; who, by the aid of a capital organ, himself the most finished of players, converts his drawing-room into a chapel, his week days into Sundays, and these latter into minor heavens.[b]

When my friend commences upon one of those solemn anthems, which peradventure struck upon my heedless ear, rambling in the side aisles of the dim abbey, some five and thirty years since, waking a new sense, and putting a soul of old religion into my young apprehension—(whether it be *that*, in which the psalmist, weary of the persecutions of bad men, wisheth to himself dove's wings—or *that other*, which, with a like measure of sobriety and pathos, inquireth by what means the young man shall best cleanse his mind)—a holy calm pervadeth me.—I am for the time

> ———rapt above earth,
> And possess joys not promised at my birth.

But when this master of the spell, not content to have laid a soul prostrate, goes on, in his power, to inflict more bliss than lies in her capacity to receive,—impatient to overcome her 'earthly' with his 'heavenly',—still pouring in, for protracted hours, fresh waves and fresh from the sea of sound, or from that inexhausted *German* ocean, above which, in triumphant progress, dolphin-seated, ride those Arions *Haydn* and *Mozart*, with their attendant tritons, *Bach*, *Beethoven*, and a countless tribe, whom to attempt to reckon up would but plunge me again in the deeps,—I stagger under the weight of harmony, reeling to and fro at my wit's end;—clouds, as of frankincense, oppress me—priests, altars, censers, dazzle before me—the genius of *his* religion hath me in her toils—a shadowy triple tiara invests the brow of my friend, late so naked, so ingenuous—he is Pope,—and by him sits, like as in the anomaly of dreams, a she-Pope too,—tri-coroneted like

[a] Anatomy of Melancholy [1821 *only*].
[b] I have been there, and still would go;
'Tis like a little heaven below.—*Dr. Watts.*

himself !—I am converted, and yet a Protestant ;—at once *malleus hereticorum*, and myself grand heresiarch : or three heresies centre in my person :—I am Marcion, Ebion, and Cerinthus—Gog and Magog—what not ?—till the coming in of the friendly supper-tray dissipates the figment, and a draught of true Lutheran beer (in which chiefly my friend shows himself no bigot) at once reconciles me to the rationalities of a purer faith ; and restores to me the genuine unterrifying aspects of my pleasant-countenanced host and [1]hostess.

ALL FOOLS' DAY

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. iii, no. xvi, p. 361 (April, 1821). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

THE compliments of the season to my worthy masters, and a merry first of April to us all !

Many happy returns of this day to you—and you—and *you*, Sir—nay, never frown, man, nor put a long face upon the matter. Do not we know one another ? what need of ceremony among friends ? we have all a touch of *that same*—you understand me—a speck of the motley. Beshrew the man who on such a day as this, the *general festival*, should affect to stand aloof. I am none of those sneakers. I am free of the corporation, and care not who knows it. He that meets me in the forest to-day, shall meet with no wise-acre, I can tell him. *Stultus sum.* Translate me that, and take the meaning of it to yourself for your pains. What, man, we have four quarters of the globe on our side, at the least computation.

Fill us a cup of that sparkling gooseberry—we will drink no wise, melancholy, politic port on this day—and let us troll the catch of Amiens—*duc ad me—duc ad me*—how goes it ?

> Here shall he see
> Gross fools as he.

Now would I give a trifle to know historically and authentically, who was the greatest fool that ever lived. I would

[1] *For a postscript to this essay in the* L. M., *here omitted, see Editor's Notes.*

certainly give him in a bumper. Marry, of the present breed, I think I could without much difficulty name you the party.

Remove your cap a little further, if you please; it hides my bauble. And now each man bestride his hobby, and dust away his bells to what tune he pleases. I will give you, for my part,

> ——— The crazy old church clock,
> And the bewildered chimes.

Good master [a]Empedocles, you are welcome. It is long since you went a salamander-gathering down Ætna. Worse than samphire-picking by some odds. 'Tis a mercy your worship did not singe your mustachios.

Ha! [b]Cleombrotus! and what salads in faith did you light upon at the bottom of the Mediterranean? You were founder, I take it, of the disinterested sect of the Calenturists.

Gebir, my old free-mason, and prince of plasterers at [c]Babel, bring in your trowel, most Ancient Grand! You have claim to a seat here at my right hand, as patron of the stammerers. You left your work, if I remember Herodotus correctly, at eight hundred million toises, or thereabout, above the level of the sea. Bless us, what a long bell you must have pulled, to call your top workmen to their nuncheon on the low grounds of Sennaar. Or did you send up your garlick and onions by a rocket? I am a rogue if I am not ashamed to show you our Monument on Fish-street Hill, after your altitudes. Yet we think it somewhat.

What, the magnanimous Alexander in tears?—cry, baby, put its finger in its eye, it shall have another globe, round as an orange, pretty moppet!

Mister Adams——'odso, I honour your coat—pray do us the favour to read to us that sermon, which you lent to Mistress Slipslop—the twenty and second in your

[a] ——— He who, to be deem'd
A god, leap'd fondly into Etna flames— [1821 *only*].
[b] He who, to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea— [1821 *only*].
[c] The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Sennaar. [1821 *only*].

portmanteau there—on Female Incontinence—the same—it will come in most irrelevantly and impertinently seasonable to the time of the day.

[1]Good Master Raymund Lully, you look wise. Pray correct that error.——

[2]Duns, spare your definitions. I must fine you a bumper, or a paradox. We will have nothing said or done syllogistically this day. Remove those logical forms, waiter, that no gentleman break the tender shins of his apprehension stumbling across them.

Master Stephen, you are late.—Ha! Cokes, is it you?—Aguecheek, my dear knight, let me pay my devoir to you.—Master Shallow, your worship's poor servant to command.—Master Silence, I will use few words with you.—Slender, it shall go hard if I edge not you in somewhere.—You six will engross all the poor wit of the company to-day.—I know it, I know it.

Ha! honest [3]R——, my fine old Librarian of Ludgate, time out of mind, art thou here again? Bless thy doublet, it is not over-new, threadbare as thy stories:—what dost thou flitting about the world at this rate?—Thy customers are extinct, defunct, bed-rid, have ceased to read long ago.—Thou goest still among them, seeing if, peradventure, thou canst hawk a volume or two.—Good [3]Granville S——, thy last patron, is flown.

> King Pandion, he is dead,
> All thy friends are lapt in lead,—

Nevertheless, noble R——, come in, and take your seat here, between Armado and Quisada: for in true courtesy, in gravity, in fantastic smiling to thyself, in courteous smiling upon others, in the goodly ornature of well-apparelled speech, and the commendation of wise sentences, thou art nothing inferior to those accomplished Dons of Spain. The spirit of chivalry forsake me for ever, when I forget thy singing the song of Macheath, which declares that he might be *happy with either*, situated between those two ancient spinsters—when I forget the inimitable formal

[1] Good Master Raymond Lully] Mr. —— 1821.

[2] Duns, spare your definitions.] Mr. Hazlitt, I cannot indulge you in your definition. 1821.

[3] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

love which thou didst make, turning now to the one, and now to the other, with that Malvolian smile—as if Cervantes, not Gay, had written it for his hero; and as if thousands of periods must revolve, before the mirror of courtesy could have given his invidious preference between a pair of so goodly-propertied and meritorious-equal damsels. * * * * *

To descend from these altitudes, and not to protract our Fools' Banquet beyond its appropriate day,—for I fear the second of April is not many hours distant—in sober verity I will confess a truth to thee, reader. I love a *Fool*—as naturally, as if I were of kith and kin to him. When a child, with child-like apprehensions, that dived not below the surface of the matter, I read those *Parables*—not guessing at their involved wisdom—I had more yearnings towards that simple architect, that built his house upon the sand, than I entertained for his more cautious neighbour; I grudged at the hard censure pronounced upon the quiet soul that kept his talent; and—prizing their simplicity beyond the more provident, and, to my apprehension, somewhat *unfeminine* wariness of their competitors—I felt a kindliness, that almost amounted to a *tendre*, for those five thoughtless virgins.—I have never made an acquaintance since, that lasted; or a friendship, that answered; with any that had not some tincture of the absurd in their characters. I venerate an honest obliquity of understanding. The more laughable blunders a man shall commit in your company, the more tests he giveth you, that he will not betray or overreach you. I love the safety, which a palpable hallucination warrants; the security, which a word out of season ratifies. And take my word for this, reader, and say a fool told it you, if you please, that he who hath not a dram of folly in his mixture, hath pounds of much worse matter in his composition. It is observed, that 'the foolisher the fowl or fish,—woodcocks,—dotterels,—cod's-heads, &c. the finer the flesh thereof', and what are commonly the world's received fools, but such whereof the world is not worthy? and what have been some of the kindliest patterns of our species, but so many darlings of absurdity, minions of the goddess, and her white boys?—Reader, if you wrest my

words beyond their fair construction, it is you, and not I, that are the *April* [1]*Fool.*

A QUAKER'S MEETING

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. iii, no. xvi, p. 384 (April, 1821). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

Still-born Silence! thou that art
Flood-gate of the deeper heart!
Offspring of a heavenly kind!
Frost o' the mouth, and thaw o' the mind!
Secrecy's confident, and he
Who makes religion mystery!
Admiration's speaking'st tongue!
Leave, thy desert shades among,
Reverend hermits' hallowed cells,
Where retired devotion dwells!
With thy enthusiasms come,
Seize our tongues, and strike us dumb![a]

Reader, would'st thou know what true peace and quiet mean; would'st thou find a refuge from the noises and clamours of the multitude; would'st thou enjoy at once solitude and society; would'st thou possess the depth of thy own spirit in stillness, without being shut out from the consolatory faces of thy species; would'st thou be alone, and yet accompanied; solitary, yet not desolate; singular, yet not without some to keep thee in countenance; a unit in aggregate; a simple in composite:—come with me into a Quaker's Meeting.

Dost thou love silence deep as that 'before the winds were made'? go not out into the wilderness, descend not into the profundities of the earth; shut not up thy casements; nor pour wax into the little cells of thy ears, with little-faith'd self-mistrusting Ulysses.—Retire with me into a Quaker's Meeting.

For a man to refrain even from good words, and to hold his peace, it is commendable; but for a multitude, it is great mastery.

What is the stillness of the desert, compared with this place? what the uncommunicating muteness of fishes?—

[a] From 'Poems of all sorts', by Richard Fleckno, 1653.

[1] *In* 1821 *this essay is dated at end* '1st April, 1821'.

here the goddess reigns and revels.—'Boreas, and Cesias, and Argestes loud,' do not with their inter-confounding uproars more augment the brawl—nor the waves of the blown Baltic with their clubbed sounds—than their opposite (Silence her sacred self) is multiplied and rendered more intense by numbers, and by sympathy. She too hath her deeps, that call unto deeps. Negation itself hath a positive more and less; and closed eyes would seem to obscure the great obscurity of midnight.

There are wounds, which an imperfect solitude cannot heal. By imperfect I mean that which a man enjoyeth by himself. The perfect is that which he can sometimes attain in crowds, but nowhere so absolutely as in a Quaker's Meeting.—Those first hermits did certainly understand this principle, when they retired into Egyptian solitudes, not singly, but in shoals, to enjoy one another's want of conversation. The Carthusian is bound to his brethren by this agreeing spirit of incommunicativeness. In secular occasions, what so pleasant as to be reading a book through a long winter evening, with a friend sitting by—say, a wife—he, or she, too, (if that be probable), reading another, without interruption, or oral communication?—can there be no sympathy without the gabble of words?—away with this inhuman, shy, single, shade-and-cavern-haunting solitariness. Give me, Master Zimmerman, a sympathetic solitude.

To pace alone in the cloisters, or side aisles of some cathedral, time-stricken;

> Or under hanging mountains,
> Or by the fall of fountains;

is but a vulgar luxury, compared with that which those enjoy, who come together for the purposes of more complete, abstracted solitude. This is the loneliness 'to be felt.'—The Abbey Church of Westminster hath nothing so solemn, so spirit-soothing, as the naked walls and benches of a Quaker's Meeting. Here are no tombs, no inscriptions,

> sands, ignoble things,
> Dropt from the ruined sides of kings—

but here is something, which throws Antiquity herself into the fore-ground—SILENCE—eldest of things—language of

old Night—primitive Discourser—to which the insolent decays of mouldering grandeur have but arrived by a violent, and, as we may say, unnatural progression.

> How reverend is the view of these hushed heads,
> Looking tranquillity !

Nothing-plotting, nought-caballing, unmischievous synod! convocation without intrigue ! parliament without debate! what a lesson dost thou read to council, and to consistory !—if my pen treat of you lightly—as haply it will wander—yet my spirit hath gravely felt the wisdom of your custom, when sitting among you in deepest peace, which some out-welling tears would rather confirm than disturb, I have reverted to the times of your beginnings, and the sowings of the seed by Fox and Dewesbury.—I have witnessed that, which brought before my eyes your heroic tranquillity, inflexible to the rude jests and serious violences of the insolent soldiery, republican or royalist, sent to molest you—for ye sate betwixt the fires of two persecutions, the out-cast and off-scowering of church and presbytery.—I have seen the reeling sea-ruffian, who had wandered into your receptacle, with the avowed intention of disturbing your quiet, from the very spirit of the place receive in a moment a new heart, and presently sit among ye as a lamb amidst lambs. And I remembered Penn before his accusers, and Fox in the bail-dock, where he was lifted up in spirit, as he tells us, and 'the Judge and the Jury became as dead men under his feet.'

Reader, if you are not acquainted with it, I would recommend to you, above all church-narratives, to read Sewell's History of the Quakers. It is in folio, and is the abstract of the journals of Fox, and the primitive Friends. It is far more edifying and affecting than any thing you will read of Wesley and his colleagues. Here is nothing to stagger you, nothing to make you mistrust, no suspicion of alloy, no drop or dreg of the worldly or ambitious spirit. You will here read the true story of that much-injured, ridiculed man (who perhaps hath been a by-word in your mouth,)—James Naylor : what dreadful sufferings, with what patience, he endured, even to the boring through of his tongue with red-hot irons, without a murmur ; and with what strength of mind, when the delusion he had

fallen into, which they stigmatised for blasphemy, had given way to clearer thoughts, he could renounce his error, in a strain of the beautifullest humility, yet keep his first grounds, and be a Quaker still !—so different from the practice of your common converts from enthusiasm, who, when they apostatize, *apostatize all*, and think they can never get far enough from the society of their former errors, even to the renunciation of some saving truths, with which they had been mingled, not implicated.

Get the Writings of John Woolman by heart ; and love the early Quakers.

How far the followers of these good men in our days have kept to the primitive spirit, or in what proportion they have substituted formality for it, the Judge of Spirits can alone determine. I have seen faces in their assemblies, upon which the dove sate visibly brooding. Others again I have watched, when my thoughts should have been better engaged, in which I could possibly detect nothing but a blank inanity. But quiet was in all, and the disposition to unanimity, and the absence of the fierce controversial workings.—If the spiritual pretensions of the Quakers have abated, at least they make few pretences. Hypocrites they certainly are not, in their preaching. It is seldom indeed that you shall see one get up amongst them to hold forth. Only now and then a trembling, female, generally *ancient*, voice is heard—you cannot guess from what part of the meeting it proceeds—with a low, buzzing, musical sound, laying out a few words which ' she thought might suit the condition of some present ', with a quaking diffidence, which leaves no possibility of supposing that any thing of female vanity was mixed up, where the tones were so full of tenderness, and a restraining modesty.—The men, for what I observed, speak seldomer.

Once only, and it was some years ago, I witnessed a sample of the old Foxian orgasm. It was a man of giant stature, who, as Wordsworth phrases it, might have danced ' from head to foot equipt in iron mail '. His frame was of iron too. But *he* was malleable. I saw him shake all over with the spirit—I dare not say, of delusion. The strivings of the outer man were unutterable—he seemed not to speak, but to be spoken from. I saw the strong man

bowed down, and his knees to fail—his joints all seemed loosening—it was a figure to set off against Paul Preaching —the words he uttered were few, and sound—he was evidently resisting his will—keeping down his own word-wisdom with more mighty effort, than the world's orators strain for theirs. 'He had been a WIT in his youth', he told us, with expressions of a sober remorse. And it was not till long after the impression had begun to wear away, that I was enabled, with something like a smile, to recall the striking incongruity of the confession—understanding the term in its worldly acceptation—with the frame and physiognomy of the person before me. His brow would have scared away the Levities—the [1]Jocos Risus-que—faster than the Loves fled the face of Dis at Enna.—By *wit*, even in his youth, I will be sworn he understood something far within the limits of an allowable liberty.

More frequently the Meeting is broken up without a word having been spoken. But the mind has been fed. You go away with a sermon, not made with hands. You have been in the milder caverns of Trophonius; or as in some den, where that fiercest and savagest of all wild creatures, the TONGUE, that unruly member, has strangely lain tied up and captive. You have bathed with stillness. —O when the spirit is sore fretted, even tired to sickness of the janglings, and nonsense-noises of the world, what a balm and a solace it is, to go and seat yourself, for a quiet half hour, upon some undisputed corner of a bench, among the gentle Quakers!

Their garb and stillness conjoined, present [2]an uniformity, tranquil and herd-like—as in the pasture—'forty feeding like one'.—

The very garments of a Quaker seem incapable of receiving a soil; and cleanliness in them to be something more than the absence of its contrary. Every Quakeress is a lily; and when they come up in bands to their Whitsun-conferences, whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis, from all parts of the United Kingdom, they show like troops of the Shining Ones.

[1] Jocos] Joci 1821. [2] an] a 1821.

THE OLD AND THE NEW SCHOOLMASTER

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. iii, no. xvii, p. 492 (May, 1821). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

My reading has been lamentably desultory and immethodical. Odd, out of the way, old English plays, and treatises, have supplied me with most of my notions, and ways of feeling. In every thing that relates to *science*, I am a whole Encyclopædia behind the rest of the world. I should have scarcely cut a figure among the franklins, or country gentlemen, in king John's days. I know less geography than a school-boy of six weeks' standing. To me a map of old Ortelius is as authentic as Arrowsmith. I do not know whereabout Africa merges into Asia; whether Ethiopia lie in one or other of those great divisions; nor can form the remotest conjecture of the position of New South Wales, or Van Diemen's Land. Yet do I hold a correspondence with a very dear friend in the first-named of these two Terræ Incognitæ. I have no astronomy. I do not know where to look for the Bear, or Charles's Wain; the place of any star; or the name of any of them at sight. I guess at Venus only by her brightness—and if the sun on some portentous morn were to make his first appearance in the West, I verily believe, that, while all the world were gasping in apprehension about me, I alone should stand unterrified, from sheer incuriosity and want of observation. Of history and chronology I possess some vague points, such as one cannot help picking up in the course of miscellaneous study; but I never deliberately sat down to a chronicle, even of my own country. I have most dim apprehensions of the four great monarchies; and sometimes the Assyrian, sometimes the Persian, floats as *first* in my fancy. I make the widest conjectures concerning Egypt, and her shepherd kings. My friend *M.*, with great painstaking, got me to think I understood the first proposition in Euclid, but gave me over in despair at the second. I am entirely unacquainted with the modern languages; and, like a better man than myself, have 'small Latin and less Greek'. I am a stranger to the shapes and texture of the commonest trees, herbs, flowers—

not from the circumstance of my being town-born—for I should have brought the same inobservant spirit into the world with me, had I first seen it 'on Devon's leafy shores',—and am no less at a loss among purely town-objects, tools, engines, mechanic processes.—Not that I affect ignorance—but my head has not many mansions, nor spacious; and I have been obliged to fill it with such cabinet curiosities as it can hold without aching. I sometimes wonder, how I have passed my probation with so little discredit in the world, as I have done, upon so meagre a stock. But the fact is, a man may do very well with a very little knowledge, and scarce be found out, in mixed company; every body is so much more ready to produce his own, than to call for a display of your acquisitions. But in a *tête-à-tête* there is no shuffling. The truth will out. There is nothing which I dread so much, as the being left alone for a quarter of an hour with a sensible, well-informed man, that does not know me. I lately got into a dilemma of this sort.—

In one of my daily jaunts between Bishopsgate and Shacklewell, the coach stopped to take up a staid-looking gentleman, about the wrong side of thirty, who was giving his parting directions (while the steps were adjusting), in a tone of mild authority, to a tall youth, who seemed to be neither his clerk, his son, nor his servant, but something partaking of all three. The youth was dismissed, and we drove on. As we were the sole passengers, he naturally enough addressed his conversation to me; and we discussed the merits of the fare, the civility and punctuality of the driver; the circumstance of an opposition coach having been lately set up, with the probabilities of its success—to all which I was enabled to return pretty satisfactory answers, having been drilled into this kind of etiquette by some years' daily practice of riding to and fro in the stage aforesaid—when he suddenly alarmed me by a startling question, whether I had seen the show of prize cattle that morning in Smithfield? Now as I had not seen it, and do not greatly care for such sort of exhibitions, I was obliged to return a cold negative. He seemed a little mortified, as well as astonished, at my declaration, as (it appeared) he was just come fresh from the sight, and

doubtless had hoped to compare notes on the subject. However he assured me that I had lost a fine treat, as it far exceeded the show of last year. We were now approaching Norton Falgate, when the sight of some shop-goods *ticketed* freshened him up into a dissertation upon the cheapness of cottons this spring. I was now a little in heart, as the nature of my morning avocations had brought me into some sort of familiarity with the raw material; and I was surprised to find how eloquent I was becoming on the state of the India market—when, presently, he dashed my incipient vanity to the earth at once, by inquiring whether I had ever made any calculation as to the value of the rental of all the retail shops in London. Had he asked of me, what song the Sirens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, I might, with Sir Thomas Browne, have hazarded a 'wide solution'.[a] My companion saw my embarrassment, and, the almshouses beyond Shoreditch just coming in view, with great good-nature and dexterity shifted his conversation to the subject of public charities; which led to the comparative merits of provision for the poor in past and present times, with observations on the old monastic institutions, and charitable orders;—but, finding me rather dimly impressed with some glimmering notions from old poetic associations, than strongly fortified with any speculations reducible to calculation on the subject, he gave the matter up; and, the country beginning to open more and more upon us, as we approached the turnpike at Kingsland (the destined termination of his journey), he put a home thrust upon me, in the most unfortunate position he could have chosen, by advancing some queries relative to the North Pole Expedition. While I was muttering out something about the Panorama of those strange regions (which I had actually seen), by way of parrying the question, the coach stopping relieved me from any further apprehensions. My companion getting out, left me in the comfortable possession of my ignorance; and I heard him, as he went off, putting questions to an outside passenger, who had alighted with him, regarding an epidemic disorder, that had been rife about Dalston; and which, my friend

[a] Urn Burial.

assured him, had gone through five or six schools in that neighbourhood. The truth now flashed upon me, that my companion was a schoolmaster; and that the youth, whom he had parted from at our first acquaintance, must have been one of the bigger boys, or the usher.—He was evidently a kind-hearted man, who did not seem so much desirous of provoking a discussion by the questions which he put, as of obtaining information at any rate. It did not appear that he took any interest, either, in such kind of inquiries, for their own sake; but that he was in some way bound to seek for knowledge. A greenish-coloured coat, which he had on, forbade me to surmise that he was a clergyman. The adventure gave birth to some reflections on the difference between persons of his profession in past and present times.

Rest to the souls of those fine old Pedagogues; the breed, long since extinct, of the Lilys, and the Linacres: who believing that all learning was contained in the languages which they taught, and despising every other acquirement as superficial and useless, came to their task as to a sport! Passing from infancy to age, they dreamed away all their days as in a grammar-school. Revolving in a perpetual cycle of declensions, conjugations, syntaxes, and prosodies; renewing constantly the occupations which had charmed their studious childhood; rehearsing continually the part of the past; life must have slipped from them at last like one day. They were always in their first garden, reaping harvests of their golden time, among their *Flori* and their *Spici-legia;* in Arcadia still, but kings; the ferule of their sway not much harsher, but of like dignity with that mild sceptre attributed to king Basileus; the Greek and Latin, their stately Pamela and their Philoclea; with the occasional duncery of some untoward Tyro, serving for a refreshing interlude of a Mopsa, or a clown Damætas!

With what a savour doth the Preface to Colet's, or (as it is sometimes called) Paul's Accidence, set forth! 'To exhort every man to the learning of grammar, that intendeth to attain the understanding of the tongues, wherein is contained a great treasury of wisdom and knowledge, it would seem but vain and lost labour; for so much as it is

known, that nothing can surely be ended, whose beginning is either feeble or faulty; and no building be perfect, whereas the foundation and ground-work is ready to fall, and unable to uphold the burden of the frame.' How well doth this stately preamble (comparable to those which Milton commendeth as 'having been the usage to prefix to some solemn law, then first promulgated by Solon, or Lycurgus') correspond with and illustrate that pious zeal for conformity, expressed in a succeeding clause, which would fence about grammar-rules with the severity of faith-articles!—'as for the diversity of grammars, it is well profitably taken away by the King's Majesties wisdom, who foreseeing the inconvenience, and favourably providing the remedie, caused one kind of grammar by sundry learned men to be diligently drawn, and so to be set out, only everywhere to be taught for the use of learners, and for the hurt in changing of schoolmaisters.' What a *gusto* in that which follows: 'wherein it is profitable that he can orderly decline his noun, and his verb.' *His* noun!

The fine dream is fading away fast; and the least concern of a teacher in the present day is to inculcate grammar-rules.

The modern schoolmaster is expected to know a little of every thing, because his pupil is required not to be entirely ignorant of any thing. He must be superficially, if I may say so, omniscient. He is to know something of pneumatics; of chemistry; of whatever is curious, or proper to excite the attention of the youthful mind; an insight into mechanics is desirable, with a touch of statistics; the quality of soils, &c. botany, the constitution of his country, *cum multis aliis*. You may get a notion of some part of his expected duties by consulting the famous Tractate on Education addressed to Mr. Hartlib.

All these things—these, or the desire of them—he is expected to instil, not by set lessons from professors, which he may charge in the bill, but at school-intervals, as he walks the streets, or saunters through green fields (those natural instructors), with his pupils. The least part of what is expected from him, is to be done in school-hours. He must insinuate knowledge at the *mollia tempora fandi*. He must seize every occasion—the season of the year—the

time of the day—a passing cloud—a rainbow—a waggon of hay—a regiment of soldiers going by—to inculcate something useful. He can receive no pleasure from a casual glimpse of Nature, but must catch at it as an object of instruction. He must interpret beauty into the picturesque. He cannot relish a beggar-man, or a gipsy, for thinking of the suitable improvement. Nothing comes to him, not spoiled by the sophisticating medium of moral uses. The Universe—that Great Book, as it has been called—is to him indeed, to all intents and purposes, a book, out of which he is doomed to read tedious homilies to distasting schoolboys.—Vacations themselves are none to him, he is only rather worse off than before ; for commonly he has some intrusive upper-boy fastened upon him at such times ; some cadet of a great family ; some neglected lump of nobility, or gentry ; that he must drag after him to the play, to the Panorama, to Mr. Bartley's Orrery, to the Panopticon, or into the country, to a friend's house, or to his favourite watering-place. Wherever he goes, this uneasy shadow attends him. A boy is at his board, and in his path, and in all his movements. He is boy-rid, sick of perpetual boy.

Boys are capital fellows in their own way, among their mates ; but they are unwholesome companions for grown people. The restraint is felt no less on the one side, than on the other.—Even a child, that ' plaything for an hour ', tires *always*. The noises of children, playing their own fancies—as I now hearken to them by fits, sporting on the green before my window, while I am engaged in these grave speculations at my neat suburban retreat at Shacklewell—by distance made more sweet—inexpressibly take from the labour of my task. It is like writing to music. They seem to modulate my periods. They ought at least to do so—for in the voice of that tender age there is a kind of poetry, far unlike the harsh prose-accents of man's conversation.—I should but spoil their sport, and diminish my own sympathy for them, by mingling in their pastime.

I would not be domesticated all my days with a person of very superior capacity to my own—not, if I know myself at all, from any considerations of jealousy or self-comparison, for the occasional communion with such minds

has constituted the fortune and felicity of my life—but the habit of too constant intercourse with spirits above you, instead of raising you, keeps you down. Too frequent doses of original thinking from others, restrain what lesser portion of that faculty you may possess of your own. You get entangled in another man's mind, even as you lose yourself in another man's grounds. You are walking with a tall varlet, whose strides out-pace yours to lassitude. The constant operation of such potent agency would reduce me, I am convinced, to imbecility. You may derive thoughts from others; your way of thinking, the mould in which your thoughts are cast, must be your own. Intellect may be imparted, but not each man's intellectual frame.—

As little as I should wish to be always thus dragged upwards, as little (or rather still less) is it desirable to be stunted downwards by your associates. The trumpet does not more stun you by its loudness, than a whisper teases you by its provoking inaudibility.

Why are we never quite at our ease in the presence of a schoolmaster?—because we are conscious that he is not quite at his ease in ours. He is awkward, and out of place, in the society of his equals. He comes like Gulliver from among his little people, and he cannot fit the stature of his understanding to yours. He cannot meet you on the square. He wants a point given him, like an indifferent whist-player. He is so used to teaching, that he wants to be teaching *you*. One of these professors, upon my complaining that these little sketches of mine were anything but methodical, and that I was unable to make them otherwise, kindly offered to instruct me in the method by which young gentlemen in *his* seminary were taught to compose English themes.—The jests of a schoolmaster are coarse, or thin. They do not *tell* out of school. He is under the restraint of a formal and didactive hypocrisy in company, as a clergyman is under a moral one. He can no more let his intellect loose in society, than the other can his inclinations.—He is forlorn among his co-evals; his juniors cannot be his friends.

'I take blame to myself', said a sensible man of this profession, writing to a friend respecting a youth who had

quitted his school abruptly, 'that your nephew was not more attached to me. But persons in my situation are more to be pitied, than can well be imagined. We are surrounded by young, and, consequently, ardently affectionate hearts, but *we* can never hope to share an atom of their affections. The relation of master and scholar forbids this. *How pleasing this must be to you, how I envy your feelings*, my friends will sometimes say to me, when they see young men, whom I have educated, return after some years absence from school, their eyes shining with pleasure, while they shake hands with their old master, bringing a present of game to me, or a toy to my wife, and thanking me in the warmest terms for my care of their education. A holiday is begged for the boys; the house is a scene of happiness; I, only, am sad at heart—This fine-spirited and warm-hearted youth, who fancies he repays his master with gratitude for the care of his boyish years—this young man—in the eight long years I watched over him with a parent's anxiety, never could repay me with one look of genuine feeling. He was proud, when I praised; he was submissive, when I reproved him; but he did never *love* me—and what he now mistakes for gratitude and kindness for me, is but the pleasant sensation, which all persons feel at revisiting the scene of their boyish hopes and fears; and the seeing on equal terms the man they were accustomed to look up to with reverence. My wife too,' this interesting correspondent goes on to say, 'my once darling Anna, is the wife of a schoolmaster.—When I [1]married her—knowing that the wife of a schoolmaster ought to be a busy notable creature, and fearing that my gentle Anna would ill supply the loss of my dear bustling mother, just then dead, who never sat still, was in every part of the house in a moment, and whom I was obliged sometimes to threaten to fasten down in a chair, to save her from fatiguing herself to death—I expressed my fears, that I was bringing her into a way of life unsuitable to her; and she, who loved me tenderly, promised for my sake to exert herself to perform the duties of her new situation. She promised, and she has kept her word. What wonders will not woman's love perform?—My house is managed

[1] married] courted 1821.

with a propriety and decorum, unknown in other schools; my boys are well fed, look healthy, and have every proper accommodation; and all this performed with a careful economy, that never descends to meanness. But I have lost my gentle, *helpless* Anna!—When we sit down to enjoy an hour of repose after the fatigue of the day, I am compelled to listen to what have been her useful (and they are really useful) employments through the day, and what she proposes for her to-morrow's task. Her heart and her features are changed by the duties of her situation. To the boys, she never appears other than the *master's wife*, and she looks up to me as the *boys' master;* to whom all show of [1]love and affection would be highly improper, and unbecoming the dignity of her situation and mine. Yet *this* my gratitude forbids me to hint to her. For my sake she submitted to be this altered creature, and can I reproach her for [2]it?'—For the communication of this letter, I am indebted to my cousin Bridget.

VALENTINE'S DAY

[Printed in *The Examiner*, Feb. 14, 1819; *The Indicator*, no. lxxi, Feb. 14, 1821; signed * * * *. Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

Hail to thy returning festival, old Bishop Valentine! Great is thy name in the rubric, thou venerable Arch-flamen of Hymen! Immortal Go-between! who and what manner of person art thou? Art thou but a *name*, typifying the restless principle which impels poor humans to seek perfection in union? or wert thou indeed a mortal prelate, with thy tippet and thy rochet, thy apron on, and decent lawn sleeves? Mysterious personage! like unto thee, assuredly, there is no other mitred father in the calendar; not Jerome, [3]nor Ambrose, nor Cyril; nor the consigner of undipt infants to eternal torments, Austin, whom all mothers hate; nor he who hated all mothers, Origen;

[1] love and affection] fond affection 1821. [2] it?'] it? These kind of complaints are not often drawn from me. I am aware that I am a fortunate, I mean a prosperous man.'—My feelings prevent me from transcribing any further.—For the communication &c. 1821. [3] nor] or 1821.

nor Bishop Bull, nor Archbishop Parker, nor Whitgift. Thou comest attended with thousands and ten thousands of little Loves, and the air is

Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings.

Singing Cupids are thy choristers and thy precentors; and instead of the crosier, the mystical arrow is borne before thee.

In other words, this is the day on which those charming little missives, ycleped Valentines, cross and intercross each other at every street and turning. The weary and all for-spent twopenny postman sinks beneath a load of delicate embarrassments, not his own. It is scarcely credible to what an extent this ephemeral courtship is carried on in this loving town, to the great enrichment of porters, and detriment of knockers and bell-wires. In these little visual interpretations, no emblem is so common as the *heart*,—that little three-cornered exponent of all our hopes and fears,—the bestuck and bleeding heart; it is twisted and tortured into more allegories and affectations than an opera hat. What authority we have in history or mythology for placing the head-quarters and metropolis of God Cupid in this anatomical seat rather than in any other, is not very clear; but we have got it, and it will serve as well as any other. Else we might easily imagine, upon some other system which might have prevailed for any thing which our pathology knows to the contrary, a lover addressing his mistress, in perfect simplicity of feeling, 'Madam, my *liver* and fortune are entirely at your disposal'; or putting a delicate question, 'Amanda, have you a *midriff* to bestow?' But custom has settled these things, and awarded the seat of sentiment to the aforesaid triangle, while its less fortunate neighbours wait at animal and anatomical distance.

Not many sounds in life, and I include all urban and all rural sounds, exceed in interest a *knock at the door*. It 'gives a very echo to the throne where Hope is seated'. But its issues seldom answer to this oracle within. It is so seldom that just the person we want to see comes. But of all the clamorous visitations the welcomest in expectation is the sound that ushers in, or seems to usher in,

a Valentine. As the raven himself was hoarse that announced the fatal entrance of Duncan, so the knock of the postman on this day is light, airy, confident, and befitting one that bringeth good tidings. It is less mechanical than on other days; you will say, 'That is not the post, I am sure.' Visions of Love, of Cupids, of Hymens!—[1]delightful eternal common-places, which 'having been will always be'; which no school-boy nor school-man can write away; having [2]your irreversible throne in the fancy and affections—what are your transports, when the happy maiden, opening with careful finger, careful not to break the emblematic seal, bursts upon the sight of some well-designed allegory, some type, some youthful fancy, not without verses—

Lovers all,
A madrigal,

or some such device, not over abundant in sense—young Love disclaims it,—and not quite silly—something between wind and water, a chorus where the sheep might almost join the shepherd, as they did, or as I apprehend they did, in Arcadia.

All Valentines are not foolish; and I shall not easily forget thine, my kind friend (if I may have leave to call you so) [3]E. B.—E. B. lived opposite a young maiden, whom he had often seen, unseen, from his parlour window in C—e-street. She was all joyousness and innocence, and just of an age to enjoy receiving a Valentine, and just of a temper to bear the disappointment of missing one with good humour. E. B. is an artist of no common powers; in the fancy parts of designing, perhaps inferior to none; his name is known at the bottom of many a well executed vignette in the way of his profession, but no further; for E. B. is modest, and the world meets nobody half-way. E. B. meditated how he could repay this young maiden for many a favour which she had done him unknown; for when a kindly face greets us, though but passing by, and never knows us again, nor we it, we should feel it as an obligation; and E. B. did. This good artist set himself at work to please the damsel. It was just before

[1] delightful] and all those delightful 1821. [2] your] their 1821.
[3] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

Valentine's day three years since. He wrought, unseen and unsuspected, a wondrous work. We need not say it was on the finest gilt paper with borders—full, not of common hearts and heartless allegory, but all the prettiest stories of love from Ovid, and older poets than Ovid (for E. B. is a scholar). There was Pyramus and Thisbe, and be sure Dido was not forgot, nor Hero and Leander, and swans more than sang in Cayster, with mottos and fanciful devices, such as beseemed,—a work in short of magic. Iris dipt the woof. This on Valentine's eve he commended to the all-swallowing indiscriminate orifice—(O ignoble trust!)—of the common post; but the humble medium did its duty, and from his watchful stand, the next morning, he saw the cheerful messenger knock, and by and by the precious charge delivered. He saw, unseen, the happy girl unfold the Valentine, dance about, clap her hands, as one after one the pretty emblems unfolded themselves. She danced about, not with light love, or foolish expectations, for she had no lover; or, if she had, none she knew that could have created those bright images which delighted her. It was more like some fairy present; a God-send, as our familiarly pious ancestors termed a benefit received, where the benefactor was unknown. It would do her no harm. It would do her good for ever after. It is good to love the unknown. I only give this as a specimen of E. B. and his modest way of doing a concealed kindness.

Good-morrow to my Valentine, sings poor Ophelia; and no better wish, but with better auspices, we wish to all faithful lovers, who are not too wise to despise old legends, but are content to rank themselves humble diocesans of old Bishop Valentine, and his true church.

IMPERFECT SYMPATHIES

[Printed, under the title, *Jews, Quakers, Scotchmen, and Other Imperfect Sympathies*, in *The London Magazine*, vol. iv, no. xx, p. 152 (Aug. 1821). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathizeth with all things, I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy in any thing

Those national repugnancies do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, [1]or Dutch.—*Religio Medici.*

THAT the author of the Religio Medici, mounted upon the airy stilts of abstraction, conversant about notional and conjectural essences; in whose categories of Being the possible took the upper hand of the actual; should have overlooked the impertinent individualities of such poor concretions as mankind, is not much to be admired. It is rather to be wondered at, that in the genus of animals he should have condescended to distinguish that species at all. For myself—earth-bound and fettered to the scene of my activities,—

Standing on earth, not rapt above the sky,

I confess that I do feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons. Whatever is, is to me a matter of taste or distaste; or when once it becomes indifferent, it begins to be disrelishing. I am, in plainer words, a bundle of prejudices—made up of likings and dislikings—the veriest thrall to sympathies, [2]apathies, antipathies. In a certain sense, I hope it may be said of me that I am a lover of my species. I can feel for all indifferently, but I cannot feel towards [3]all equally. The more purely-English word that expresses sympathy will better explain my meaning. I can be a friend to a worthy man, who upon another account cannot be my mate or *fellow*. I cannot *like* all people alike.[a]

[a] I would be understood as confining myself to the subject of *imperfect sympathies*. To nations or classes of men there can be no direct *antipathy*. There may be individuals born and constellated so opposite to another individual nature, that the same sphere cannot hold them. I have met with my moral antipodes, and can believe the story of two persons meeting (who never saw one another before in their lives) and instantly fighting.

——We by proof find there should be
'Twixt man and man such an antipathy,
That though he can show no just reason why
For any former wrong or injury,

[1] or] and 1821. [2] apathies] dispathies 1821. [3] all] them all 1821.

I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen, and am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me—and in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it. There is something more plain and ingenuous in their mode of proceeding. We know one another at first sight. There is an order of imperfect intellects (under which mine must be content to rank) which in its constitution is essentially anti-Caledonian. The owners of the sort of faculties I allude to, have minds rather suggestive than comprehensive. They have no pretences to much clearness or precision in their ideas, or in their manner of expressing them. Their intellectual wardrobe (to confess fairly) has few whole pieces in it. They are content with fragments and scattered pieces of Truth. She presents no full front to them—a feature or side-face at the most. Hints and glimpses, germs and crude essays at a system, is the utmost they pretend to. They beat up a little game peradventure —and leave it to knottier heads, more robust constitutions, to run it down. The light that lights them is not steady and polar, but mutable and shifting: waxing, and again waning. Their conversation is accordingly. They will throw out a random word in or out of season, and be content to let it pass for what it is worth. They cannot speak always as if they were upon their oath—but must be understood, speaking or writing, with some abatement. They seldom wait to mature a proposition, but e'en bring it to market in the green ear. They delight to impart their defective discoveries as they arise, without waiting for their full developement. They are no systematizers, and would but err more by attempting it. Their minds, as

> Can neither find a blemish in his fame,
> Nor aught in face or feature justly blame,
> Can challenge or accuse him of no evil,
> Yet notwithstanding hates him as a devil.

The lines are from old Heywood's 'Hierarchie of Angels', and he subjoins a curious story in confirmation, of a Spaniard who attempted to assassinate a King Ferdinand of Spain, and being put to the rack could give no other reason for the deed but an inveterate antipathy which he had taken to the first sight of the King.

> ——The cause which to that act compell'd him
> Was, he ne'er loved him since he first beheld him.

I said before, are suggestive merely. The brain of a true Caledonian (if I am not mistaken) is constituted upon quite a different plan. [1]His Minerva is born in panoply. You are never admitted to see his ideas in their growth—if, indeed, they do grow, and are not rather put together upon principles of clock-work. You never catch his mind in an undress. He never hints or suggests any thing, but unlades his stock of ideas in perfect order and completeness.[2] He brings his total wealth into company, and gravely unpacks it. His riches are always about him. He never stoops to catch a glittering something in your presence, to share it with you, before he quite knows whether it be true touch or not. You cannot cry *halves* to any thing that he finds. He does not find, but bring. You never witness his first apprehension of a thing. His understanding is always at its meridian—you never see the first dawn, the early streaks.—He has no falterings of self-suspicion. Surmises, guesses, misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousnesses, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo [3]conceptions, have no place in his brain, or vocabulary. The twilight of dubiety never falls upon him. Is he orthodox—he has no doubts. Is he an infidel—he has none either. Between the affirmative and the negative there is no border-land with him. You cannot hover with him upon the confines of truth, or wander in the maze of a probable argument. He always keeps the path. You cannot make excursions with him—for he sets you right. His taste never fluctuates. His morality never abates. He cannot compromise, or understand middle actions. There can be but a right and a wrong. His conversation is as a book. His affirmations have the sanctity of an oath. You must speak upon the square with him. He stops a metaphor like a suspected person in an enemy's country. 'A healthy book!'—said one of his countrymen to me, who had ventured to give that appellation to John Buncle,—'did I catch rightly what you said? I have

[1] His] Its 1821. [2] *In* 1821 *the sentence below beginning* He has no falterings, *&c., with that which follows it, come in here.* [3] conceptions . . . vocabulary.] conceptions, and every stage that stops short of absolute certainty and conviction—his intellectual faculty seems a stranger to. 1821.

heard of a man in health, and of a healthy state of body, but I do not see how that epithet can be properly applied to a book.' Above all, you must beware of indirect expressions before a Caledonian. Clap an extinguisher upon your irony, if you are unhappily blest with a vein of it. Remember you are upon your oath. I have a print of a graceful female after Leonardo da Vinci, which I was showing off to Mr. ****. After he had examined it minutely, I ventured to ask him how he liked MY BEAUTY (a foolish name it goes by among my friends)—when he very gravely assured me, that 'he had considerable respect for my character and talents' (so he was pleased to say), 'but had not given himself much thought about the degree of my personal pretensions.' The misconception staggered me, but did not seem much to disconcert him.—Persons of this nation are particularly fond of affirming a truth—which nobody doubts. They do not so properly affirm, as annunciate it. They do indeed appear to have such a love of truth (as if, like virtue, it were valuable for itself) that all truth becomes equally valuable, whether the proposition that contains it be new or old, disputed, or such as is impossible to become a subject of disputation. I was present not long since at a party of North Britons, where a son of Burns was expected; and happened to drop a silly expression (in my South British way), that I wished it were the father instead of the son—when four of them started up at once to inform me, that 'that was impossible, because he was dead'. An impracticable wish, it seems, was more than they could conceive. Swift has hit off this part of their character, namely their love of truth, in his biting way, but with an illiberality that necessarily confines the passage to the margin.[a] The tediousness of [1]these people

[a] There are some people who think they sufficiently acquit themselves, and entertain their company, with relating [2]facts of no consequence, not at all out of the road of such common incidents as happen every day; and this I have observed more frequently among the Scots than any other nation, who are very careful not to omit the minutest circumstances of time or place; which kind of discourse, if it were not a little relieved by the uncouth terms and phrases, as well as accent and gesture peculiar to that country, would be hardly tolerable.—*Hints towards an Essay on Conversation.*

[1] these people] the Scotch 1821. [2] facts] of facts 1821.

is certainly [1]provoking. I wonder if they ever tire one another !—In my early life I had a passionate fondness for the poetry of Burns. I have sometimes foolishly hoped to ingratiate myself with his countrymen by expressing it. But I have always found that a true Scot resents your admiration of his compatriot, even more than he would your contempt of him. The latter he imputes to your 'imperfect acquaintance with many of the words which he uses'; and the same objection makes it a presumption in you to suppose that you can admire [2]him.—Thomson they seem to have forgotten. Smollett they have neither forgotten nor forgiven for his delineation of Rory and his companion, upon their first introduction to our metropolis. —Speak of Smollett as a great genius, and they will retort upon you Hume's History compared with *his* Continuation of it. What if the historian had continued Humphrey Clinker ?

I have, in the abstract, no disrespect for Jews. They are a piece of stubborn antiquity, compared with which Stonehenge is in its nonage. They date beyond the pyramids. But I should not care to be in habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation. I confess that I have not the nerves to enter their synagogues. Old prejudices cling about me. I cannot shake off the story of Hugh of Lincoln. Centuries of injury, contempt, and hate, on the one side,—of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate, on the other, between our and their fathers, must, and ought, to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run clear and kindly yet ; or that a few fine words, such as candour, liberality, the light of a nineteenth century, can close up the breaches of [3]so deadly a disunion. A Hebrew is nowhere congenial to me. He is least distasteful on 'Change—for the mercantile spirit levels all distinctions, as all are beauties in the dark. I boldly confess that I do not relish the approximation of Jew and Christian, which has become so fashionable. The

[1] provoking] proverbial 1821. [2] him.—Thomson] him.—I have a great mind to give up Burns. There is certainly a bragging spirit of generosity, a swaggering assertion of independence, and *all that*, in his writings. Thomson 1821. [3] so deadly a disunion.] such a mighty antipathy. 1821.

reciprocal endearments have, to me, something hypocritical and unnatural in them. I do not like to see the Church and Synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility. If *they* are converted, why do they not come over to us altogether ? Why keep up a form of separation, when the life of it is fled ? If they can sit with us at table, why do they keck at our cookery ? I do not understand these half convertites. Jews christianizing—Christians judaizing—puzzle me. I like fish or flesh. A moderate Jew is a more confounding piece of anomaly than a wet Quaker. The spirit of the synagogue is essentially *separative*. [1]B—— would have been more in keeping if he had abided by the faith of his forefathers. There is a fine scorn in his face, which nature meant to be [2]of —— Christians. The Hebrew spirit is strong in him, in spite of his proselytism. He cannot conquer the Shibboleth. How it breaks out, when he sings, ' The Children of Israel passed through the Red Sea ! ' The auditors, for the moment, are as Egyptians to him, and he rides over our necks in triumph. There is no mistaking him.—B—— has a strong expression of sense in his countenance, and it is confirmed by his singing. The foundation of his vocal excellence is sense. He sings with understanding, as Kemble delivered dialogue. He would sing the Commandments, and give an appropriate character to each prohibition. His nation, in general, have not over-sensible countenances. How should they ?—but you seldom see a silly expression among them. Gain, and the pursuit of gain, sharpen a man's visage. I never heard of an idiot being born among them.—Some admire the Jewish female-physiognomy. I admire it—but with trembling. Jael had those full dark inscrutable eyes.

In the Negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity. I have felt yearnings of tenderness towards some of these faces—or rather masks—that have looked out kindly upon one in casual encounters in the streets and highways. I love what Fuller beautifully calls—these ' images of God cut in ebony '. But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and my good-nights with them—because they are black.

[1] *See Editor's Note on ' The South-Sea House '.* [2] of —] — of 1821.

I love Quaker ways, and Quaker worship. I venerate the Quaker principles. It does me good for the rest of the day when I meet any of their people in my path. When I am ruffled or disturbed by any occurrence, the sight or quiet voice of a Quaker acts upon me as a ventilator, lightening the air, and taking off a load from the bosom. But I cannot like the Quakers (as Desdemona would say) 'to live with them'. I am all over sophisticated—with humours, fancies, craving hourly sympathy. I must have books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes, ambiguities, and a thousand whim-whams, which their simpler taste can do without. I should starve at their primitive banquet. My appetites are too high for the salads which (according to Evelyn) Eve dressed for the angel, my gusto too excited

To sit a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

The indirect answers which Quakers are often found to return to a question put to them may be explained, I think, without the vulgar assumption, that they are more given to evasion and equivocating than other people. They naturally look to their words more carefully, and are more cautious of committing themselves. They have a peculiar character to keep up on this head. They stand in a manner upon their veracity. A Quaker is by law exempted from taking an oath. The custom of resorting to an oath in extreme cases, sanctified as it is by all religious antiquity, is apt (it must be confessed) to introduce into the laxer sort of minds the notion of two kinds of truth—the one applicable to the solemn affairs of justice, and the other to the common proceedings of daily intercourse. As truth bound upon the conscience by an oath can be but truth, so in the common affirmations of the shop and the market-place a latitude is expected, and conceded upon questions wanting this solemn covenant. Something less than truth satisfies. It is common to hear a person say, 'You do not expect me to speak as if I were upon my oath.' Hence a great deal of incorrectness and inadvertency, short of falsehood, creeps into ordinary conversation; and a kind of secondary or laic-truth is tolerated, where clergy-truth—oath-truth, by the nature of the circumstances, is not

required. A Quaker knows none of this distinction. His simple affirmation being received, upon the most sacred occasions, without any further test, stamps a value upon the words which he is to use upon the most indifferent topics of life. He looks to them, naturally, with more severity. You can have of him no more than his word. He knows if he is caught tripping in a casual expression, he forfeits, for himself, at least, his claim to the invidious exemption. He knows that his syllables are weighed—and how far a consciousness of this particular watchfulness, exerted against a person, has a tendency to produce indirect answers, and a diverting of the question by honest means, might be illustrated, and the practice justified, by a more sacred example than is proper to be [1]adduced upon this occasion. The admirable presence of mind, which is notorious in Quakers upon all contingencies, might be traced to this imposed self-watchfulness—if it did not seem rather an humble and secular scion of that old stock of religious constancy, which never bent or faltered, in the Primitive Friends, or gave way to the winds of persecution, to the violence of judge or accuser, under trials and racking examinations. 'You will never be the wiser, if I sit here answering your questions till midnight,' said one of those upright Justicers to Penn, who had been putting law-cases with a puzzling subtlety. 'Thereafter as the answer may be,' retorted the Quaker. The astonishing composure of this people is sometimes ludicrously displayed in lighter instances.—I was travelling in a stage-coach with three male Quakers, buttoned up in the straitest non-conformity of their sect. We stopped to bait at Andover, where a meal, partly tea apparatus, partly supper, was set before us. My friends confined themselves to the tea-table. I in my way took supper. When the landlady brought in the bill, the eldest of my companions discovered that she had charged for both meals. This was resisted. Mine hostess was very clamorous and positive. Some mild arguments were used on the part of the Quakers, for which the heated mind of the good lady seemed by no means a fit recipient. The guard came in with his usual peremptory notice. The Quakers pulled out their money, and formally tendered it

[1] adduced] more than hinted at 1821.

—so much for tea—I, in humble imitation, tendering mine —for the supper which I had taken. She would not relax in her demand. So they all three quietly put up their silver, as did myself, and marched out of the room, the eldest and gravest going first, with myself closing up the rear, who thought I could not do better than follow the example of such grave and warrantable personages. We got in. The steps went up. The coach drove off. The murmurs of mine hostess, not very indistinctly or ambiguously pronounced, became after a time inaudible—and now my conscience, which the whimsical scene had for a while suspended, beginning to give some twitches, I waited in the hope that some justification would be offered by these serious persons for the seeming injustice of their conduct. To my great surprise, not a syllable was dropped on the subject. They sate as mute as at a meeting. At length the eldest of them broke silence, by inquiring of his next neighbour, 'Hast thee heard how indigos go at the India House?' and the question operated as a soporific on my moral feeling as far as Exeter.

WITCHES, AND OTHER NIGHT-FEARS

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We are too hasty when we set down our ancestors in the gross for fools, for the monstrous inconsistencies (as they seem to us) involved in their creed of witchcraft. In the relations of this visible world we find them to have been as rational, and shrewd to detect an historic anomaly, as ourselves. But when once the visible world was supposed to be opened, and the lawless agency of bad spirits assumed, what measures of probability, of decency, of fitness, or proportion—of that which distinguishes the likely from the palpable absurd—could they have to guide them in the rejection or admission of any particular testimony?—That maidens pined away, wasting inwardly as their waxen images consumed before a fire—that corn was lodged, and cattle lamed—that whirlwinds uptore in diabolic revelry the oaks of the forest—or that spits and kettles only danced

a fearful-innocent vagary about some rustic's kitchen when no wind was stirring—were all equally probable where no law of agency was understood. That the prince of the powers of darkness, passing by the flower and pomp of the earth, should lay preposterous siege to the weak fantasy of indigent eld—has neither likelihood nor unlikelihood *à priori* to us, who have no measure to guess at his policy, or standard to estimate what rate those anile souls may fetch in the devil's market. Nor, when the wicked are expressly symbolized by a goat, was it to be wondered at so much, that *he* should come sometimes in that body, and assert his metaphor.—That the intercourse was opened at all between both worlds was perhaps the mistake—but that once assumed, I see no reason for disbelieving one attested story of this nature more than another on the score of absurdity. There is no law to judge of the lawless, or canon by which a dream may be criticised.

I have sometimes thought that I could not have existed in the days of received witchcraft; that I could not have slept in a village where one of those reputed hags dwelt. Our ancestors were bolder or more obtuse. Amidst the universal belief that these wretches were in league with the author of all evil, holding hell tributary to their muttering, no simple Justice of the Peace seems to have scrupled issuing, or silly Headborough serving, a warrant upon them—as if they should subpœna Satan!—Prospero in his boat, with his books and wand about him, suffers himself to be conveyed away at the mercy of his enemies to an unknown island. He might have raised a storm or two, we think, on the passage. His acquiescence is in exact analogy to the non-resistance of witches to the constituted powers.—What stops the Fiend in Spenser from tearing Guyon to pieces—or who had made it a condition of his prey, that Guyon must take assay of the glorious bait—we have no guess. We do not know the laws of that country.

From my childhood I was extremely inquisitive about witches and witch-stories. My maid, and more legendary aunt, supplied me with good store. But I shall mention the accident which directed my curiosity originally into this channel. In my father's book-closet, the History of the Bible, by Stackhouse, occupied a distinguished station.

The pictures with which it abounds—one of the ark, in particular, and another of Solomon's temple, delineated with all the fidelity of ocular admeasurement, as if the artist had been upon the spot—attracted my childish attention. There was a picture, too, of the Witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that I had never seen. We shall come to that hereafter. Stackhouse is in two huge tomes —and there was a pleasure in removing folios of that magnitude, which, with infinite straining, was as much as I could manage, from the situation which they occupied upon an upper shelf. I have not met with the work from that time to this, but I remember it consisted of Old Testament stories, orderly set down, with the *objection* appended to each story, and the *solution* of the objection regularly tacked to that. The *objection* was a summary of whatever difficulties had been opposed to the credibility of the history, by the shrewdness of ancient or modern infidelity, drawn up with an almost complimentary excess of candour. The *solution* was brief, modest, and satisfactory. The bane and antidote were both before you. To doubts so put, and so quashed, there seemed to be an end for ever. The dragon lay dead, for the foot of the veriest babe to trample on. But—like as was rather feared than realised from that slain monster in Spenser—from the womb of those crushed errors young dragonets would creep, exceeding the prowess of so tender a Saint George as myself to vanquish. The habit of expecting objections to every passage, set me upon starting more objections, for the glory of finding a solution of my own for them. I became staggered and perplexed, a sceptic in long coats. The pretty Bible stories which I had read, or heard read in church, lost their purity and sincerity of impression, and were turned into so many historic or chronologic theses to be defended against whatever impugners. I was not to disbelieve them, but—the next thing to that—I was to be quite sure that some one or other would or had disbelieved them. Next to making a child an infidel, is the letting him know that there are infidels at all. Credulity is the man's weakness, but the child's strength. O, how ugly sound scriptural doubts from the mouth of a babe and a suckling !—I should have lost myself in these

mazes, and have pined away, I think, with such unfit sustenance as these husks afforded, but for a fortunate piece of ill-fortune, which about this time befel me. Turning over the picture of the ark with too much haste, I unhappily made a breach in its ingenious fabric—driving my inconsiderate fingers right through the two larger quadrupeds—the elephant, and the camel—that stare (as well they might) out of the two last windows next the steerage in that unique piece of naval architecture. Stackhouse was thenceforth locked up, and became an interdicted treasure. With the book, the *objections* and *solutions* gradually cleared out of my head, and have seldom returned since in any force to trouble me.—But there was one impression which I had imbibed from Stackhouse, which no lock or bar could shut out, and which was destined to try my childish nerves rather more seriously.—That detestable picture !

I was dreadfully alive to nervous terrors. The night-time solitude, and the dark, were my hell. The sufferings I endured in this nature would justify the expression. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life—so far as memory serves in things so long ago—without an assurance, which realized its own prophecy, of seeing some frightful spectre. Be old Stackhouse then acquitted in part, if I say, that to his picture of the Witch raising up Samuel—(O that old man covered with a mantle !) I owe—not my midnight terrors, the hell of my infancy—but the shape and manner of their visitation. It was he who dressed up for me a hag that nightly sate upon my pillow—a sure bed-fellow, when my aunt or my maid was far from me. All day long, while the book was permitted me, I dreamed waking over his delineation, and at night (if I may use so bold an expression) awoke into sleep, and found the vision true. I durst not, even in the day-light, once enter the chamber where I slept, without my face turned to the window, aversely from the bed where my witch-ridden pillow was.—Parents do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in the dark. The feeling about for a friendly arm—the hoping for a familiar voice—when they wake screaming—and find none to soothe

them—what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves! The keeping them up till midnight, through candle-light and the unwholesome hours, as they are called,—would, I am satisfied, in a medical point of view, prove the better caution.—That detestable picture, as I have said, gave the fashion to my dreams—if dreams they were—for the scene of them was invariably the room in which I lay. Had I never met with the picture, the fears would have come self-pictured in some shape or other—

> Headless bear, black man, or ape—

but, as it was, my imaginations took that form.—It is not book, or picture, or the stories of foolish servants, which create these terrors in children. They can at most but give them a direction. Dear little T.H. who of all children has been brought up with the most scrupulous exclusion of every taint of superstition—who was never allowed to hear of goblin or apparition, or scarcely to be told of bad men, or to read or hear of any distressing story—finds all this world of fear, from which he has been so rigidly excluded *ab extra*, in his own ' thick-coming fancies ' ; and from his little midnight pillow, this nurse-child of optimism will start at shapes, unborrowed of tradition, in sweats to which the reveries of the cell-damned murderer are tranquillity.

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras—dire stories of Celæno and the Harpies—may reproduce themselves in the brain of superstition—but they were there before. They are transcripts, types—the archetypes are in us, and eternal. How else should the recital of that, which we know in a waking sense to be false, come to affect us at all ?—or

> ——Names, whose sense we see not,
> Fray us with things that be not ?

Is it that we naturally conceive terror from such objects, considered in their capacity of being able to inflict upon us bodily injury ?—O, least of all ! These terrors are of older standing. They date beyond body—or, without the body, they would have been the same. All the cruel, tormenting, defined devils in Dante—tearing, mangling, choking, stifling, scorching demons—are they one half so fearful to the spirit of a man, as the simple idea of a spirit unembodied following him—

> Like one that on a lonesome road
> Doth walk in fear and dread,
> And having once turn'd round, walks on,
> And turns no more his head;
> Because he knows a frightful fiend
> Doth close behind him tread.[a]

That the kind of fear here treated of is purely spiritual—that it is strong in proportion as it is objectless upon earth—that it predominates in the period of sinless infancy—are difficulties, the solution of which might afford some probable insight into our antemundane condition, and a peep at least into the shadow-land of pre-existence.

My night-fancies have long ceased to be afflictive. I confess an occasional night-mare; but I do not, as in early youth, keep a stud of them. Fiendish faces, with the extinguished taper, will come and look at me; but I know them for mockeries, even while I cannot elude their presence, and I fight and grapple with them. For the credit of my imagination, I am almost ashamed to say how tame and prosaic my dreams are grown. They are never romantic, seldom even rural. They are of architecture and of buildings—cities abroad, which I have never seen, and hardly have hope to see. I have traversed, for the seeming length of a natural day, Rome, Amsterdam, Paris, Lisbon—their churches, palaces, squares, market-places, shops, suburbs, ruins, with an inexpressible sense of delight—a map-like distinctness of trace—and a day-light vividness of vision, that was all but being awake.—I have formerly travelled among the Westmoreland fells—my highest Alps,—but they [1]are objects too mighty for the grasp of my dreaming recognition; and I have again and again awoke with ineffectual struggles of the inner eye, to make out a shape in any way whatever, of Helvellyn. Methought I was in that country, but the mountains were gone. The poverty of my dreams mortifies me. There is [2]Coleridge, at his will can conjure up icy domes, and pleasure-houses for Kubla Khan, and Abyssinian maids, and songs of Abara, and caverns,

> Where Alph, the sacred river, runs,

to solace his night solitudes—when I cannot muster a fiddle.

[a] Mr. Coleridge's Ancient Mariner.

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[1] are] were 1821. [2] Coleridge] C—— 1821.

Barry Cornwall has his tritons and his nereids gambolling before him in nocturnal visions, and proclaiming sons born to Neptune—when my stretch of imaginative activity can hardly, in the night season, raise up the ghost of a fish-wife. To set my failures in somewhat a mortifying light—it was after reading the noble Dream of this poet, that my fancy ran strong upon these marine spectra ; and the poor plastic power, such as it is, within me set to work, to humour my folly in a sort of dream that very night. Methought I was upon the ocean billows at some sea nuptials, riding and mounted high, with the customary train sounding their conchs before me, (I myself, you may be sure, the *leading god*,) and jollily we went careering over the main, till just where Ino Leucothea should have greeted me (I think it was Ino) with a white embrace, the billows gradually subsiding, fell from a sea-roughness to a sea-calm, and thence to a river-motion, and that river (as happens in the familiarization of dreams) was no other than the gentle Thames, which landed me, in the wafture of a placid wave or two, [1]alone, safe and inglorious, somewhere at the foot of Lambeth palace.

[2]The degree of the soul's creativeness in sleep might furnish no whimsical criterion of the quantum of poetical faculty resident in the same soul waking. An old gentleman, a friend of mine, and a humorist, used to carry this notion so far, that when he saw any stripling of his acquaintance ambitious of becoming a poet, his first question would be,—'Young man, what sort of dreams have you ?' I have so much faith in my old friend's theory, that when I feel that idle vein returning upon me, I presently subside into my proper element of prose, remembering those eluding nereids, and that inauspicious inland landing.

MY RELATIONS

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I AM arrived at that point of life, at which a man may account it a blessing, as it is a singularity, if he have either

[1] alone, *omit* 1821. [2] *See Editor's Notes.*

of his parents surviving. I have not that felicity—and sometimes think feelingly of a passage in Browne's Christian Morals, where he speaks of a man that hath lived sixty or seventy years in the world. 'In such a compass of time', he says, 'a man may have a close apprehension what it is to be forgotten, when he hath lived to find none who could remember his father, or scarcely the friends of his youth, and may sensibly see with what a face in no long time Oblivion will look upon himself.'

I had an aunt, a dear and good one. She was one whom single blessedness had soured to the world. She often used to say, that I was the only thing in it which she loved; and, when she thought I was quitting it, she grieved over me with mother's tears. A partiality quite so exclusive my reason cannot altogether approve. She was from morning till night poring over good books, and devotional exercises. Her favourite volumes were Thomas à Kempis, in Stanhope's Translation; and a Roman Catholic Prayer Book, with the *matins* and *complines* regularly set down,—terms which I was at that time too young to understand. She persisted in reading them, although admonished daily concerning their Papistical tendency; and went to church every Sabbath, as a good Protestant should do. These were the only books she studied; though, I think, at one period of her life, she told me, she had read with great satisfaction the Adventures of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman. Finding the door of the chapel in Essex-street open one day—it was in the infancy of that heresy—she went in, liked the sermon, and the manner of worship, and frequented it at intervals for some time after. She came not for doctrinal points, and never missed them. With some little asperities in her constitution, which I have above hinted at, she was a steadfast, friendly being, and a fine *old Christian.* She was a woman of strong sense, and a shrewd mind—extraordinary at a *repartee;* one of the few occasions of her breaking silence—else she did not much value wit. The only secular employment I remember to have seen her engaged in, was, the splitting of French beans, and dropping them into a China basin of fair water. The odour of those tender vegetables to this day comes back upon my sense, redolent of soothing recol-

lections. Certainly it is the most delicate of culinary operations.

Male aunts, as somebody calls them, I had none—to remember. By the uncle's side I may be said to have been born an orphan. Brother, or sister, I never had any —to know them. A sister, I think, that should have been Elizabeth, died in both our infancies. What a comfort, or what a care, may I not have missed in her !—But I have cousins, sprinkled about in Hertfordshire—besides *two* with whom I have been all my life in habits of the closest intimacy, and whom I may term cousins *par excellence*. These are James and Bridget Elia. They are older than myself by twelve, and ten, years ; and neither of them seems disposed, in matters of advice and guidance, to waive any of the prerogatives which primogeniture confers. May they continue still in the same mind ; and when they shall be seventy-five, and seventy-three, years old (I cannot spare them sooner), persist in treating me in my grand climacteric precisely as a stripling, or younger brother !

James is an inexplicable cousin. Nature hath her unities, which not every critic can penetrate ; or, if we feel, we cannot explain them. The pen of Yorick, and of none since his, could have drawn J. E. entire—those fine Shandian lights and shades, which make up his story. I must limp after in my poor antithetical manner, as the fates have given me grace and talent. J. E. then—to the eye of a common observer at least—seemeth made up of contradictory principles.—The genuine child of impulse, the frigid philosopher of prudence—the phlegm of my cousin's doctrine is invariably at war with his temperament, which is high sanguine. With always some fire-new project in his brain, J. E. is the systematic opponent of innovation, and crier down of every thing that has not stood the test of age and experiment. With a hundred fine notions chasing one another hourly in his fancy, he is startled at the least approach to the romantic in others ; and, determined by his own sense in every thing, commends *you* to the guidance of common sense on all occasions.—With a touch of the eccentric in all which he does, or says, he is only anxious that *you* should not commit yourself by doing any thing absurd or singular. On my once letting slip at table, that

I was not fond of a certain popular dish, he begged me at any rate not to *say* so—for the world would think me mad. He disguises a passionate fondness for works of high art (whereof he hath amassed a choice collection), under the pretext of buying only to sell again—that his enthusiasm may give no encouragement to yours. Yet, if it were so, why does that piece of tender, pastoral Dominichino hang still by his wall ?—is the ball of his sight much more dear to him ?—or what picture-dealer can talk like him ?

Whereas mankind in general are observed to warp their speculative conclusions to the bent of their individual humours, *his* theories are sure to be in diametrical opposition to his constitution. He is courageous as Charles of Sweden, upon instinct; chary of his person, upon principle, as a travelling Quaker.—He has been preaching up to me, all my life, the doctrine of bowing to the great—the necessity of forms, and manner, to a man's getting on in the world. He himself never aims at either, that I can discover,—and has a spirit, that would stand upright in the presence of the Cham of Tartary. It is pleasant to hear him discourse of patience—extolling it as the truest wisdom—and to see him during the last seven minutes that his dinner is getting ready. Nature never ran up in her haste a more restless piece of workmanship than when she moulded this impetuous cousin—and Art never turned out a more elaborate orator than he can display himself to be, upon his favourite topic of the advantages of quiet, and contentedness in the state, whatever it [1]may be, that we are placed in. He is triumphant on this theme, when he has you safe in one of those short stages that ply for the western road, in a very obstructing manner, at the foot of John Murray's street—where you get in when it is empty, and are expected to wait till the vehicle hath completed her just freight—a trying three quarters of an hour to some people. He wonders at your fidgetiness,—' where could we be better than we are, *thus sitting, thus consulting?*'—'prefers, for his part, a state of rest to locomotion,'—with an eye all the while upon the coachman—till at length, waxing out of all patience, *at your want of it*, he breaks out into a pathetic remonstrance at the fellow for detaining us so

[1] may *omit* 1821.

long over the time which he had professed, and declares peremptorily, that 'the gentleman in the coach is determined to get out, if he does not drive on that instant.'

Very quick at inventing an argument, or detecting a sophistry, he is incapable of attending *you* in any chain of arguing. Indeed he makes wild work with logic; and seems to jump at most admirable conclusions by some process, not at all akin to it. Consonantly enough to this, he hath been heard to deny, upon certain occasions, that there exists such a faculty at all in man as *reason;* and wondereth how man came first to have a conceit of it—enforcing his negation with all the might of *reasoning* he is master of. He has some speculative notions against laughter, and will maintain that laughing is not natural to *him*—when peradventure the next moment his lungs shall crow like Chanticleer. He says some of the best things in the world—and declareth that wit is his aversion. It was he who said, upon seeing the Eton boys at play in their grounds—*What a pity to think, that these fine ingenuous lads in a few years will all be changed into frivolous Members of Parliament!*

His youth was fiery, glowing, tempestuous—and in age he discovereth no symptom of cooling. This is that which I admire in him. I hate people who meet Time half-way. I am for no compromise with that inevitable spoiler. While he lives, J. E. will take his swing.—It does me good, as I walk towards the street of my daily avocation, on some fine May morning, to meet him marching in a quite opposite direction, with a jolly handsome presence, and shining sanguine face, that indicates some purchase in his eye—a Claude—or a Hobbema—for much of his enviable leisure is consumed at Christie's, and Phillips's—or where not, to pick up pictures, and such gauds. On these occasions he mostly stoppeth me, to read a short lecture on the advantage a person like me possesses above himself, in having his time occupied with business which he *must do*—assureth me that he often feels it hang heavy on his hands—wishes he had fewer holidays—and goes off—Westward Ho!—chanting a tune, to Pall Mall—perfectly convinced that he has convinced me—while I proceed in my opposite direction tuneless.

It is pleasant again to see this Professor of Indifference doing the honours of his new purchase, when he has fairly housed it. You must view it in every light, till *he* has found the best—placing it at this distance, and at that, but always suiting the focus of your sight to his own. You must spy at it through your fingers, to catch the aërial perspective—though you assure him that to you the landscape shows much more agreeable without that artifice. Woe be to the luckless wight, who does not only not respond to his rapture, but who should drop an unseasonable intimation of preferring one of his anterior bargains to the present !—The last is always his best hit—his ' Cynthia of the minute '.—Alas ! how many a mild Madonna have I known to *come in*—a Raphael !—keep its ascendancy for a few brief moons—then, after certain intermedial degradations, from the front drawing-room to the back gallery, thence to the dark parlour,—adopted in turn by each of the Carracci, under successive lowering ascriptions of filiation, mildly breaking its fall—consigned to the oblivious lumber-room, *go out* at last a Luca Giordano, or plain Carlo Maratti !—which things when I beheld—musing upon the chances and mutabilities of fate below, hath made me to reflect upon the altered condition of great personages, or that woful Queen of Richard the Second—

> —— set forth in pomp,
> She came adorned hither like sweet May;
> Sent back like Hallowmass or shortest day.

With great love for *you*, J. E. hath but a limited sympathy with what you feel or do. He lives in a world of his own, and makes slender guesses at what passes in your mind. He never pierces the marrow of your habits. He will tell an old established play-goer, that Mr. Such-a-one, of So-and-so (naming one of the theatres), is a very lively comedian—as a piece of news ! He advertised me but the other day of some pleasant green lanes which he had found out for me, *knowing me to be a great walker*, in my own immediate vicinity—who have haunted the identical spot any time these twenty years !—He has not much respect for that class of feelings which goes by the name of sentimental. He applies the definition of real evil to bodily sufferings exclusively—and rejecteth all others as imaginary.

He is affected by the sight, or the bare supposition, of a creature in pain, to a degree which I have never witnessed out of womankind. A constitutional acuteness to this class of sufferings may in part account for this. The animal tribe in particular he taketh under his especial protection. A broken-winded or spur-galled horse is sure to find an advocate in him. An over-loaded ass is his client for ever. He is the apostle to the brute kind—the never-failing friend of those who have none to care for them. The contemplation of a lobster boiled, or eels skinned *alive*, will wring him so, that ' all for pity he could die '. It will take the savour from his palate, and the rest from his pillow, for days and nights. With the intense feeling of Thomas Clarkson, he wanted only the steadiness of pursuit, and unity of purpose, of that ' true yoke-fellow with Time ', to have effected as much for the *Animal*, as *he* hath done for the *Negro Creation*. But my uncontrollable cousin is but imperfectly formed for purposes which demand co-operation. He cannot wait. His amelioration-plans must be ripened in a day. For this reason he has cut but an equivocal figure in benevolent societies, and combinations for the alleviation of human sufferings. His zeal constantly makes him to outrun, and put out, his coadjutors. He thinks of relieving,—while they think of debating. He was black-balled out of a society for the Relief [1]of * * * * * * * * * * because the fervor of his humanity toiled beyond the formal apprehension, and creeping processes, of his associates. I shall always consider this distinction as a patent of nobility in the Elia family !

Do I mention these seeming inconsistencies to smile at, or upbraid, my unique cousin ? Marry, heaven, and all good manners, and the understanding that should be between kinsfolk, forbid !—With all the strangenesses of this *strangest of the Elias*—I would not have him in one jot or tittle other than he is ; neither would I barter or exchange my wild kinsman for the most exact, regular, and every-way consistent kinsman breathing.

In my next, reader, I may perhaps give you some account of my cousin Bridget—if you are not already surfeited with

[1] *See Editor's Note on ' The South-Sea House '.*

cousins—and take you by the hand, if you are willing to go with us, on an excursion which we made a summer or two since, in search of *more cousins*—

Through the green plains of pleasant [1]Hertfordshire.

MACKERY END, IN HERTFORDSHIRE

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. iv, no. xix, p. 28 (July, 1821). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

Bridget Elia has been my housekeeper for many a long year. I have obligations to Bridget, extending beyond the period of memory. We house together, old bachelor and maid, in a sort of double singleness; with such tolerable comfort, upon the whole, that I, for one, find in myself no sort of disposition to go out upon the mountains, with the rash king's offspring, to bewail my celibacy. We agree pretty well in our tastes and habits—yet so, as 'with a difference'. We are generally in harmony, with occasional bickerings—as it should be among near relations. Our sympathies are rather understood, than expressed; and once, upon my dissembling a tone in my voice more kind than ordinary, my cousin burst into tears, and complained that I was altered. We are both great readers in different directions. While I am hanging over (for the thousandth time) some passage in old Burton, or one of his strange contemporaries, she is abstracted in some modern tale, or adventure, whereof our common reading-table is daily fed with assiduously fresh supplies. Narrative teazes me. I have little concern in the progress of events. She must have a story—well, ill, or indifferently told—so there be life stirring in it, and plenty of good or evil accidents. The fluctuations of fortune in fiction—and almost in real life—have ceased to interest, or operate but dully upon me. Out-of-the-way humours and opinions—heads with some diverting twist in them—the oddities of authorship please me most. My cousin has a native disrelish of any thing that sounds odd or bizarre. Nothing goes down with her, that is quaint, irregular, or out of the road of common sympathy. She 'holds Nature more clever'. I can pardon

[1] Hertfordshire.] Hertfordshire. | Till when, Farewell. 1821.

her blindness to the beautiful obliquities of the Religio Medici ; but she must apologise to me for certain disrespectful insinuations, which she has been pleased to throw out latterly, touching the intellectuals of a dear favourite of mine, of the last century but one—the thrice noble, chaste, and virtuous,—but again somewhat fantastical, and original-brain'd, generous Margaret Newcastle.

It has been the lot of my cousin, oftener perhaps than I could have wished, to have had for her associates and mine, free-thinkers—leaders, and disciples, of novel philosophies and systems ; but she neither wrangles with, nor accepts, their opinions. That which was good and venerable to her, [1]when a child, retains its authority over her mind still. She never juggles or plays tricks with her understanding.

We are both of us inclined to be a little too positive ; and I have observed the result of our disputes to be almost uniformly this—that in matters of fact, dates, and circumstances, it turns out, that I was in the right, and my cousin in the wrong. But where we have differed upon moral points ; upon something proper to be done, or let alone ; whatever heat of opposition, or steadiness of conviction, I set out with, I am sure always, in the long run, to be brought over to her way of thinking.

I must touch upon the foibles of my kinswoman with a gentle hand, for Bridget does not like to be told of her faults. She hath an awkward trick (to say no worse of it) of reading in company : at which times she will answer *yes* or *no* to a question, without fully understanding its purport—which is provoking, and derogatory in the highest degree to the dignity of the putter of the said question. Her presence of mind is equal to the most pressing trials of life, but will sometimes desert her upon trifling occasions. When the purpose requires it, and is a thing of moment, she can speak to it greatly ; but in matters which are not stuff of the conscience, she hath been known sometimes to let slip a word less seasonably.

Her education in youth was not much attended to ; and she happily missed all that train of female garniture, which passeth by the name of accomplishments. She was tumbled

[1] when a] when she was a 1821.

early, by accident or design, into a spacious closet of good old English reading, without much selection or prohibition, and browsed at will upon that fair and wholesome pasturage. Had I twenty girls, they should be brought up exactly in this fashion. I know not whether their chance in wedlock might not be diminished by it; but I can answer for it, that it makes (if the worst come to the worst) most incomparable old maids.

In a season of distress, she is the truest comforter; but in the teazing accidents, and minor perplexities, which do not call out the *will* to meet them, she sometimes maketh matters worse by an excess of participation. If she does not always divide your trouble, upon the pleasanter occasions of life she is sure always to treble your satisfaction. She is excellent to be at a play with, or upon a visit; but best, when she goes a journey with you.

We made an excursion together a few summers since, into Hertfordshire, to beat up the quarters of some of our less-known relations in that fine corn country.

The oldest thing I remember is Mackery End; or Mackerel End, as it is spelt, perhaps more properly, in some old maps of Hertfordshire; a farm-house,—delightfully situated within a gentle walk from Wheathampstead. I can just remember having been there, on a visit to a great-aunt, when I was a child, under the care of Bridget; who, as I have said, is older than myself by some ten years. I wish that I could throw into a heap the remainder of our joint existences, that we might share them in equal division. But that is impossible. The house was at that time in the occupation of a substantial yeoman, who had married my grandmother's sister. His name was Gladman. My grandmother was a Bruton, married to a Field. The Gladmans and the Brutons are still flourishing in that part of the county, but the Fields are almost extinct. More than forty years had elapsed since the visit I speak of; and, for the greater portion of that period, we had lost sight of the other two branches also. Who or what sort of persons inherited Mackery End—kindred or strange folk—we were afraid almost to conjecture, but determined some day to explore.

By somewhat a circuitous route, taking the noble park

at Luton in our way from Saint Alban's, we arrived at the spot of our anxious curiosity about noon. The sight of the old farm-house, though every trace of it was effaced from my recollection, affected me with a pleasure which I had not experienced for many a year. For though *I* had forgotten it, *we* had never forgotten being there together, and we had been talking about Mackery End all our lives, till memory on my part became mocked with a phantom of itself, and I thought I knew the aspect of a place, which, when present, O how unlike it was to *that*, which I had conjured up so many times instead of it!

Still the air breathed balmily about it; the season was in the 'heart of June', and I could say with the poet,

> [a] But thou, that didst appear so fair
> To fond imagination,
> Dost rival in the light of day
> Her delicate creation!

Bridget's was more a waking bliss than mine, for she easily remembered her old acquaintance again—some altered features, of course, a little grudged at. At first, indeed, she was ready to disbelieve for joy; but the scene soon re-confirmed itself in her affections—and she traversed every out-post of the old mansion, to the wood-house, the orchard, the place where the pigeon-house had stood (house and birds were alike flown)—with a breathless impatience of recognition, which was more pardonable perhaps than decorous at the age of fifty odd. But Bridget in some things is behind her years.

The only thing left was to get into the house—and that was a difficulty which to me singly would have been insurmountable; for I am terribly shy in making myself known to strangers and out-of-date kinsfolk. Love, stronger than scruple, winged my cousin in without me; but she soon returned with a creature that might have sat to a sculptor for the image of Welcome. It was the youngest of the Gladmans; who, by marriage with a Bruton, had become mistress of the old mansion. A comely brood are the Brutons. Six of them, females, were noted as the handsomest young women in the county. But this adopted Bruton, in my mind, was better than they all—more comely.

[a] Wordsworth, on Yarrow Visited [1821 *only*].

She was born too late to have remembered me. She just recollected in early life to have had her cousin Bridget once pointed out to her, climbing a style. But the name of kindred, and of cousinship, was enough. Those slender ties, that prove slight as gossamer in the rending atmosphere of a metropolis, bind faster, as we found it, in hearty, homely, loving Hertfordshire. In five minutes we were as thoroughly acquainted as if we had been born and bred up together; were familiar, even to the calling each other by our Christian names. So Christians should call one another. To have seen Bridget, and her—it was like the meeting of the two scriptural cousins! There was a grace and dignity, an amplitude of form and stature, answering to her mind, in this farmer's wife, which would have shined in a palace—or so we thought it. We were made welcome by husband and wife equally—we, and our friend that was with us—I had almost forgotten him—but [1]B. F. will not so soon forget that meeting, if peradventure he shall read this on the far distant shores where the Kangaroo haunts. The fatted calf was made ready, or rather was already so, as if in anticipation of our coming; and, after an appropriate glass of native wine, never let me forget with what honest pride this hospitable cousin made us proceed to Wheathampstead, to introduce us (as some new-found rarity) to her mother and sister Gladmans, who did indeed know something more of us, at a time when she almost knew nothing.—With what corresponding kindness we were received by them also—how Bridget's memory, exalted by the occasion, warmed into a thousand half-obliterated recollections of things and persons, to my utter astonishment, and her own—and to the astoundment of B. F. who sat by, almost the only thing that was not a cousin there,—old effaced images of more than half-forgotten names and circumstances still crowding back upon her, as words written in lemon come out upon exposure to a friendly warmth,—when I forget all this, then may my country cousins forget me; and Bridget no more remember, that in the days of weakling infancy I was her tender charge—as I have been her care in foolish manhood since—in those pretty pastoral walks, long ago, about Mackery End, in Hertfordshire.

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

MODERN GALLANTRY

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. vi, no. xxxv, p. 453 (Nov. 1822). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

In comparing modern with ancient manners, we are pleased to compliment ourselves upon the point of [1]gallantry; a certain obsequiousness, or deferential respect, which we are supposed to pay to females, as females.

I shall believe that this principle actuates our conduct, when I can forget, that in the nineteenth century of the era from which we date our civility, we are but just beginning to leave off the very frequent practice of whipping females in public, in common with the coarsest male offenders.

I shall believe it to be influential, when I can shut my eyes to the fact, that in England women are still occasionally—hanged.

I shall believe in it, when actresses are no longer subject to be hissed off a stage by gentlemen.

I shall believe in it, when Dorimant hands a fish-wife across the kennel; or assists the apple-woman to pick up her wandering fruit, which some unlucky dray has just dissipated.

I shall believe in it, when the Dorimants in humbler life, who would be thought in their way notable adepts in this refinement, shall act upon it in places where they are not known, or think themselves not observed—when I shall see the traveller for some rich tradesman part with his admired box-coat, to spread it over the defenceless shoulders of the poor woman, who is passing to her parish on the roof of the same stage-coach with him, drenched in the rain—when I shall no longer see a woman standing up in the pit of a London theatre, till she is sick and faint with the exertion, with men about her, seated at their ease, and jeering at her distress; till one, that seems to have more manners or conscience than the rest, significantly declares 'she should be welcome to his seat, if she were a little

[1] gallantry . . . to pay] gallantry, as upon a thing altogether unknown to the old classic ages. This has been defined to consist in a certain obsequiousness, or deferential respect, paid 1822.

younger and handsomer'. Place this dapper warehouseman, or that rider, in a circle of their own female acquaintance, and you shall confess you have not seen a politer-bred man in Lothbury.

Lastly, I shall begin to believe that there is some such principle influencing our conduct, when more than one-half of the drudgery and coarse servitude of the world shall cease to be performed by women.

Until that day comes, I shall never believe this boasted point to be any thing more than a conventional fiction; a pageant got up between the sexes, in a certain rank, and at a certain time of life, in which both find their account equally.

I shall be even disposed to rank it among the salutary fictions of life, when in polite circles I shall see the same attentions paid to age as to youth, to homely features as to handsome, to coarse complexions as to clear—to the woman, as she is a woman, not as she is a beauty, a fortune, or a title.

I shall believe it to be something more than a name, when a well-dressed company can advert to the topic of *female old age* without exciting, and intending to excite, a sneer:—when the phrases 'antiquated virginity', and such a one has [1] 'overstood her market', pronounced in good company, shall raise immediate offence in man, or woman, that shall hear them spoken.

Joseph Paice, of Bread-street-hill, merchant, and one of the Directors of the South-Sea company—the same to whom Edwards, the Shakspeare commentator, has addressed a fine sonnet—was the only pattern of consistent gallantry I have met with. He took me under his shelter at an early age, and bestowed some pains upon me. I owe to his precepts and example whatever there is of the man of business (and that is not much) in my composition. It was not his fault that I did not profit more. Though bred a Presbyterian, and brought up a merchant, he was the finest gentleman of his time. He had not *one* system of attention to females in the drawing-room, and *another* in the shop, or at the stall. I do not mean that he made no distinction. But he never lost sight of sex, or overlooked it

[1] overstood] overstaid 1822

in the casualties of a disadvantageous situation. I have seen him stand bare-headed—smile if you please—to a poor servant girl, while she has been inquiring of him the way to some street—in such a posture of unforced civility, as neither to embarrass her in the acceptance, nor himself in the offer, of it. He was no dangler, in the common acceptation of the word, after women: but he reverenced and upheld, in every form in which it came before him, *womanhood*. I have seen him—nay, smile not—tenderly escorting a market-woman, whom he had encountered in a shower, exalting his umbrella over her poor basket of fruit, that it might receive no damage, with as much carefulness as if she had been a Countess. To the reverend form of Female Eld he would yield the wall (though it were to an ancient beggar-woman) with more ceremony than we can afford to show our grandams. He was the Preux Chevalier of Age; the Sir Calidore, or Sir Tristan, to those who have no Calidores or Tristans to defend them. The roses, that had long faded thence, still bloomed for him in those withered and yellow cheeks.

He was never married, but in his youth he paid his addresses to the beautiful Susan Winstanley—old Winstanley's daughter of Clapton—who dying in the early days of their courtship, confirmed in him the resolution of perpetual bachelorship. It was during their short courtship, he told me, that he had been one day treating his mistress with a profusion of civil speeches—the common gallantries—to which kind of thing she had hitherto manifested no repugnance—but in this instance with no effect. He could not obtain from her a decent acknowledgment in return. She rather seemed to resent his compliments. He could not set it down to caprice, for the lady had always shown herself above that littleness. When he ventured on the following day, finding her a little better humoured, to expostulate with her on her coldness of yesterday, she confessed, with her usual frankness, that she had no sort of dislike to his attentions; that she could even endure some high-flown compliments; that a young woman placed in her situation had a right to expect all sort of civil things said to her; that she hoped she could digest a dose of adulation, short of insincerity, with as little injury to her humility

as most young women: but that—a little before he had commenced his compliments—she had overheard him by accident, in rather rough language, rating a young woman, who had not brought home his cravats quite to the appointed time, and she thought to herself, 'As I am Miss Susan Winstanley, and a young lady—a reputed beauty, and known to be a fortune,—I can have my choice of the finest speeches from the mouth of this very fine gentleman who is courting me—but if I had been poor Mary Such-a-one (*naming the milliner*),—and had failed of bringing home the cravats to the appointed hour—though perhaps I had sat up half the night to forward them—what sort of compliments should I have received then?—And my woman's pride came to my assistance; and I thought, that if it were only to do *me* honour, a female, like myself, might have received handsomer usage: and I was determined not to accept any fine speeches, to the compromise of that sex, the belonging to which was after all my strongest claim and title to them.'

I think the lady discovered both generosity, and a just way of thinking, in this rebuke which she gave her lover; and I have sometimes imagined, that the uncommon strain of courtesy, which through life regulated the actions and behaviour of my friend towards all of womankind indiscriminately, owed its happy origin to this seasonable lesson from the lips of his lamented mistress.

I wish the whole female world would entertain the same notion of these things that Miss Winstanley showed. Then we should see something of the spirit of consistent gallantry; and no longer witness the anomaly of the same man—a pattern of true politeness to a wife—of cold contempt, or rudeness, to a sister—the idolater of his female mistress—the disparager and despiser of his no less female aunt, or unfortunate—still female—maiden cousin. Just so much respect as a woman derogates from her own sex, in whatever condition placed—her handmaid, or dependent—she deserves to have diminished from herself on that score; and probably will feel the diminution, when youth, and beauty, and advantages, not inseparable from sex, shall lose of their attraction. What a woman should demand of a man in courtship, or after it, is first—respect for her as

she is a woman ;—and next to that—to be respected by him above all other women. But let her stand upon her female character as upon a foundation ; and let the attentions, incident to individual preference, be so many pretty additaments and ornaments—as many, and as fanciful, as you please—to that main structure. Let her first lesson be—with sweet Susan Winstanley—to *reverence her sex.*

THE OLD BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE

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I WAS born, and passed the first seven years of my life, in the Temple. Its church, its halls, its gardens, its fountain, its river, I had almost said—for in those young years, what was this king of rivers to me but a stream that watered our pleasant places ?—these are of my oldest recollections. I repeat, to this day, no verses to myself more frequently, or with kindlier emotion, than those of Spenser, where he speaks of this spot.

> There when they came, whereas those bricky towers,
> The which on Themmes brode aged back doth ride,
> Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
> There whylome wont the Templer knights to bide,
> Till they decayed through pride.

Indeed, it is the most elegant spot in the metropolis. What a transition for a countryman visiting London for the first time—the passing from the crowded Strand or Fleet-street, by unexpected avenues, into its magnificent ample squares, its classic green recesses ! What a cheerful, liberal look hath that portion of it, which, from three sides, overlooks the greater garden : that goodly pile

> Of building strong, albeit of Paper hight,

confronting, with massy contrast, the lighter, older, more fantastically shrouded one, named of Harcourt, with the cheerful Crown-office Row (place of my kindly engendure), right opposite the stately stream, which washes the garden-foot with her yet scarcely trade-polluted waters, and seems but just weaned from her Twickenham Naiades ! a man

would give something to have been born in such places. What a collegiate aspect has that fine Elizabethan hall, where the fountain plays, which I have made to rise and fall, how many times! to the astoundment of the young urchins, my contemporaries, who, not being able to guess at its recondite machinery, were almost tempted to hail the wondrous work as magic! What an antique air had the now almost effaced sun-dials, with their moral inscriptions, seeming coevals with that Time which they measured, and to take their revelations of its flight immediately from heaven, holding correspondence with the fountain of light! How would the dark line steal imperceptibly on, watched by the eye of childhood, eager to detect its movement, never catched, nice as an evanescent cloud, or the first arrests of sleep!

> Ah! yet doth beauty like a dial-hand
> Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived!

What a dead thing is a clock, with its ponderous embowelments of lead and brass, its pert or solemn dulness of communication, compared with the simple altar-like structure, and silent heart-language of the old dial! It stood as the garden god of Christian gardens. Why is it almost every where vanished? If its business-use be superseded by more elaborate inventions, its moral uses, its beauty, might have pleaded for its continuance. It spoke of moderate labours, of pleasures not protracted after sun-set, of temperance, and good-hours. It was the primitive clock, the horologe of the first world. Adam could scarce have missed it in Paradise. It was the measure appropriate for sweet plants and flowers to spring by, for the birds to apportion their silver warblings by, for flocks to pasture and be led to fold by. The shepherd 'carved it out quaintly in the sun'; and, turning philosopher by the very occupation, provided it with mottos more touching than tombstones. It was a pretty device of the gardener, recorded by Marvell, who, in the days of artificial gardening, made a dial out of herbs and flowers. I must quote his verses a little higher up, for they are full, as all his serious poetry was, of a witty delicacy. They will not come in awkwardly, I hope, in a talk of fountains and sun-dials. He is speaking of sweet garden scenes:

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head.
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine.
The nectarine, and curious peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach.
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Insnared with flowers, I fall on grass.
Meanwhile the mind from pleasure less
Withdraws into its happiness.
The mind, that ocean, where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.
Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide:
There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
Then whets and claps its silver wings;
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.
How well the skilful gardner drew,
Of flowers and herbs, this dial new!
Where, from above, the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run:
And, as it works, the industrious bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckon'd, but with herbs and flowers? [a]

The artificial fountains of the metropolis are, in like manner, fast vanishing. Most of them are dried up, or bricked over. Yet, where one is left, as in that little green nook behind the South-Sea House, what a freshness it gives to the dreary pile! Four little winged marble boys used to play their virgin fancies, spouting out ever fresh streams from their innocent-wanton lips, in the square of Lincoln's-inn, when I was no bigger than they were figured. They are gone, and the spring choked up. The fashion, they tell me, is gone by, and these things are esteemed childish. Why not then gratify children, by letting them stand? Lawyers, I suppose, were children once. They are awakening images to them at least. Why must every thing smack of man, and mannish? Is the world all

[a] From a copy of verses entitled The Garden.

grown up ? Is childhood dead ? Or is there not in the bosoms of the wisest and the best some of the child's heart left, to respond to its earliest enchantments ? The figures were grotesque. Are the stiff-wigged living figures, that still flitter and chatter about that area, less gothic in appearance ? or is the splutter of their hot rhetoric one half so refreshing and innocent as the little cool playful streams those exploded cherubs uttered ?

They have lately gothicised the entrance to the Inner Temple-hall, and the library front, to assimilate them, I suppose, to the body of the hall, which they do not at all resemble. What is become of the winged horse that stood over the former ? a stately arms ! and who has removed those frescoes of the Virtues, which Italianized the end of the Paper-buildings ?—my first hint of allegory ! They must account to me for these things, which I miss so greatly.

The terrace is, indeed, left, which we used to call the parade ; but the traces are passed away of the footsteps which made its pavement awful ! It is become common and profane. The old benchers had it almost sacred to themselves, in the forepart of the day at least. They might not be sided or jostled. Their air and dress asserted the parade. You left wide spaces betwixt you, when you passed them. We walk on even terms with their successors. The roguish eye of [1]J——ll, ever ready to be delivered of a jest, almost invites a stranger to vie a repartee with it. But what insolent familiar durst have mated Thomas Coventry ?—whose person was a quadrate, his step massy and elephantine, his face square as the lion's, his gait peremptory and path-keeping, indivertible from his way as a moving column, the scarecrow of his inferiors, the brow-beater of equals and superiors, who made a solitude of children wherever he came, for they fled his insufferable presence, as they would have shunned an Elisha bear. His growl was as thunder in their ears, whether he spake to them in mirth or in rebuke, his invitatory notes being, indeed, of all, the most repulsive and horrid. Clouds of snuff, aggravating the natural terrors of his speech, broke from each majestic nostril, darkening the air. He took it,

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

not by pinches, but a palmful at once, diving for it under the mighty flaps of his old-fashioned waistcoat pocket; his waistcoat red and angry, his coat dark rappee, tinctured by dye original, and by adjuncts, with buttons of obsolete gold. And so he paced the terrace.

By his side a milder form was sometimes to be seen; the pensive gentility of Samuel Salt. They were coevals, and had nothing but that and their benchership in common. In politics Salt was a whig, and Coventry a staunch tory. Many a sarcastic growl did the latter cast out—for Coventry had a rough spinous humour—at the political confederates of his associate, which rebounded from the gentle bosom of the latter like cannon-balls from wool. You could not ruffle Samuel Salt.

S. had the reputation of being a very clever man, and of excellent discernment in the chamber practice of the law. I suspect his knowledge did not amount to much. When a case of difficult disposition of money, testamentary or otherwise, came before him, he ordinarily handed it over with a few instructions to his man Lovel, who was a quick little fellow, and would despatch it out of hand by the light of natural understanding, of which he had an uncommon share. It was incredible what repute for talents S. enjoyed by the mere trick of gravity. He was a shy man; a child might pose him in a minute—indolent and procrastinating to the last degree. Yet men would give him credit for vast application in spite of himself. He was not to be trusted with himself with impunity. He never dressed for a dinner party but he forgot his sword—they wore swords then—or some other necessary part of his equipage. Lovel had his eye upon him on all these occasions, and ordinarily gave him his cue. If there was any thing which he could speak unseasonably, he was sure to do it.—He was to dine at a relative's of the unfortunate Miss Blandy on the day of her execution;—and L. who had a wary foresight of his probable hallucinations, before he set out, schooled him with great anxiety not in any possible manner to allude to her story that day. S. promised faithfully to observe the injunction. He had not been seated in the parlour, where the company was expecting the dinner summons, four minutes, when, a pause in

the conversation ensuing, he got up, looked out of window, and pulling down his ruffles—an ordinary motion with him —observed, 'it was a gloomy day,' and added, 'Miss Blandy must be hanged by this time, I suppose.' Instances of this sort were perpetual. Yet S. was thought by some of the greatest men of his time a fit person to be consulted, not alone in matters pertaining to the law, but in the ordinary niceties and embarrassments of conduct—from force of manner entirely. He never laughed. He had the same good fortune among the female world,—was a known toast with the ladies, and one or two are said to have died for love of him—I suppose, because he never trifled or talked gallantry with them, or paid them, indeed, hardly common attentions. He had a fine face and person, but wanted, methought, the spirit that should have shown them off with advantage to the women. His eye lacked [1]lustre.—Not so, thought [2]Susan P——; who, at the advanced age of sixty, was seen, in the cold evening time, unaccompanied, wetting the pavement of B——d Row, with tears that fell in drops which might be heard, because her friend had died that day—he, whom she had pursued with a hopeless passion for the last forty years—a passion, which years could not extinguish or abate; nor the long resolved, yet gently enforced, puttings off of unrelenting bachelorhood dissuade from its cherished purpose. Mild Susan P——, thou hast now thy friend in heaven!

Thomas Coventry was a cadet of the noble family of that name. He passed his youth in contracted circumstances, which gave him early those parsimonious habits which in after-life never forsook him; so that, with one windfall or another, about the time I knew him he was master of four or five hundred thousand pounds; nor did he look, or walk, worth a moidore less. He lived in a gloomy house opposite the pump in Serjeant's-inn, Fleet-street. J., the counsel, is doing self-imposed penance in it, for what reason I divine not, at this day. C. had an

[1] lustre.—Not so] lustre. Lady Mary Wortley Montague was an exception to her sex: she says, in one of her letters, 'I wonder what the women see in S. I do not think him by any means handsome. To me he appears an extraordinary dull fellow, and to want common sense. Yet the fools are all sighing for him.' Not so 1821. [2] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

agreeable seat at North Cray, where he seldom spent above a day or two at a time in the summer; but preferred, during the hot months, standing at his window in this damp, close, well-like mansion, to watch, as he said, 'the maids drawing water all day long.' I suspect he had his within-door reasons for the preference. *Hic currus et arma fuêre.* He might think his treasures more safe. His house had the aspect of a strong box. C. was a close hunks—a hoarder rather than a miser—or, if a miser, none of the mad Elwes breed, who have brought discredit upon a character, which cannot exist without certain admirable points of steadiness and unity of purpose. One may hate a true miser, but cannot, I suspect, so easily despise him. By taking care of the pence, he is often enabled to part with the pounds, upon a scale that leaves us careless generous fellows halting at an immeasurable distance behind. C. gave away 30,000*l.* at once in his life-time to a blind charity. His house-keeping was severely looked after, but he kept the table of a gentleman. He would know who came in and who went out of his house, but his kitchen chimney was never suffered to freeze.

Salt was his opposite in this, as in all—never knew what he was worth in the world; and having but a competency for his rank, which his indolent habits were little calculated to improve, might have suffered severely if he had not had honest people about him. Lovel took care of every thing. He was at once his clerk, his good servant, his dresser, his friend, his 'flapper', his guide, stop-watch, auditor, treasurer. He did nothing without consulting Lovel, or failed in any thing without expecting and fearing his admonishing. He put himself almost too much in his hands, had they not been the purest in the world. He resigned his title almost to respect as a master, if L. could ever have forgotten for a moment that he was a servant.

I knew this Lovel. He was a man of an incorrigible and losing honesty. A good fellow withal, and 'would strike'. In the cause of the oppressed he never considered inequalities, or calculated the number of his opponents. He once wrested a sword out of the hand of a man of quality that had drawn upon him; and pommelled him severely with the hilt of it. The swordsman had offered

insult to a female—an occasion upon which no odds against him could have prevented the interference of Lovel. He would stand next day bare-headed to the same person, modestly to excuse his interference—for L. never forgot rank, where something better was not [1]concerned. L. was the liveliest little fellow breathing, had a face as gay as Garrick's, whom he was said greatly to resemble (I have a portrait of him which confirms it), possessed a fine turn for humorous poetry—next to Swift and Prior—moulded heads in clay or plaster of Paris to admiration, by the dint of natural genius merely ; turned cribbage boards, and such small cabinet toys, to perfection ; took a hand at quadrille or bowls with equal facility ; made punch better than any man of his degree in England ; had the merriest quips and conceits, and was altogether as brimful of rogueries and inventions as you could desire. He was a brother of the angle, moreover, and just such a free, hearty, honest companion as Mr. Isaak Walton would have chosen to go a fishing with. I saw him in his old age and the decay of his faculties, palsy-smitten, in the last sad stage of human weakness—'a remnant most forlorn of what he was,'—yet even then his eye would light up upon the mention of his favourite Garrick. He was greatest, he would say, in Bayes—'was upon the stage nearly throughout the whole performance, and as busy as a bee.' At intervals, too, he would speak of his former life, and how he came up a little boy from Lincoln to go to service, and how his mother cried at parting with him, and how he returned, after some few years' absence, in his smart new livery to see her, and she blessed herself at the change, and could hardly be brought to believe that it was 'her own bairn'. And then, the excitement subsiding, he would weep, till I have wished that sad second-childhood might have a mother still to lay its head upon her lap. But the common mother of us all in no long time after received him gently into hers.

[1] concerned. L. was] concerned. He pleaded the cause of a delinquent in the treasury of the Temple so effectually with S. the then treasurer—that the man was allowed to keep his place. L. had the offer to succeed him. It had been a lucrative promotion. But L. chose to forego the advantage, because the man had a wife and family. L. was 1821.

With Coventry, and with Salt, in their walks upon the terrace, most commonly Peter Pierson would join, to make up a third. They did not walk linked arm in arm in those days—' as now our stout triumvirs sweep the streets,' —but generally with both hands folded behind them for state, or with one at least behind, the other carrying a cane. P. was a benevolent, but not a prepossessing man. He had that in his face which you could not term unhappiness ; it rather implied an incapacity of being happy. His cheeks were colourless, even to whiteness. His look was uninviting, resembling (but without his sourness) that of our great philanthropist. I know that he *did* good acts, but I could never make out what he *was*. Contemporary with these, but subordinate, was Daines Barrington—another oddity—he walked burly and square—in imitation, I think, of Coventry—howbeit he attained not to the dignity of his prototype. Nevertheless, he did pretty well, upon the strength of being a tolerable antiquarian, and having a brother a bishop. When the account of his year's treasurership came to be audited, the following singular charge was unanimously disallowed by the bench : ' Item, disbursed Mr. Allen, the gardener, twenty shillings, for stuff to poison the sparrows, by my orders.' Next to him was old Barton—a jolly negation, who took upon him the ordering of the bills of fare for the parliament chamber, where the benchers dine—answering to the combination rooms at college—much to the easement of his less epicurean brethren. I know nothing more of him.—Then Read, and Twopenny—Read, good-humoured and personable—Twopenny, good-humoured, but thin, and felicitous in jests upon his own figure. If T. was thin, Wharry was attenuated and fleeting. Many must remember him (for he was rather of later date) and his singular gait, which was performed by three steps and a jump regularly succeeding. The steps were little efforts, like that of a child beginning to walk ; the jump comparatively vigorous, as a foot to an inch. Where he learned this figure, or what occasioned it, I could never discover. It was neither graceful in itself, nor seemed to answer the purpose any better than common walking. The extreme tenuity of his frame, I suspect, set him upon it. It was a trial of poising. Two-

penny would often rally him upon his leanness, and hail him as Brother Lusty ; but W. had no relish of a joke. His features were spiteful. I have heard that he would pinch his cat's ears extremely, when any thing had offended him. Jackson—the omniscient Jackson he was called—was of this period. He had the reputation of possessing more multifarious knowledge than any man of his time. He was the Friar Bacon of the less literate portion of the Temple. I remember a pleasant passage, of the cook applying to him, with much formality of apology, for instructions how to write down *edge* bone of beef in his bill of commons. He was supposed to know, if any man in the world did. He decided the orthography to be—as I have given it—fortifying his authority with such anatomical reasons as dismissed the manciple (for the time) learned and happy. Some do spell it yet perversely, *aitch* bone, from a fanciful resemblance between its shape, and that of the aspirate so denominated. I had almost forgotten Mingay with the iron hand—but he was somewhat later. He had lost his right hand by some accident, and supplied it with a grappling hook, which he wielded with a tolerable adroitness. I detected the substitute before I was old enough to reason whether it were artificial or not. I remember the astonishment it raised in me. He was a blustering, loud-talking person ; and I reconciled the phenomenon to my ideas as an emblem of power—somewhat like the horns in the forehead of Michael Angelo's Moses. Baron Maseres, who walks (or did till very lately) in the costume of the reign of George the Second, closes my imperfect recollections of the old benchers of the Inner Temple.

Fantastic forms, whither are ye fled ? Or, if the like of you exist, why exist they no more for me ? Ye inexplicable, half-understood appearances, why comes in reason to tear away the preternatural mist, bright or gloomy, that enshrouded you ? Why make ye so sorry a figure in my relation, who made up to me—to my childish eyes—the mythology of the Temple ? In those days I saw Gods, as ' old men covered with a mantle ', walking upon the earth. Let the dreams of classic idolatry perish, —extinct be the fairies and fairy trumpery of legendary

fabling,—in the heart of childhood, there will, for ever, spring up a well of innocent or wholesome superstition—the seeds of exaggeration will be busy there, and vital—from every-day forms educing the unknown and the uncommon. In that little Goshen there will be light, when the grown world flounders about in the darkness of sense and materiality. While childhood, and while dreams, reducing childhood, shall be left, imagination shall not have spread her holy wings totally to fly the earth.

P.S. I have done injustice to the soft shade of Samuel Salt. See what it is to trust to imperfect memory, and the erring notices of childhood! Yet I protest I always thought that he had been a bachelor! This gentleman, [1]R. N. informs me, married young, and losing his lady in child-bed, within the first year of their union, fell into a deep melancholy, from the effects of which, probably, he never thoroughly recovered. In what a new light does this place his rejection (O call it by a gentler name!) of mild Susan P——, unravelling into beauty certain peculiarities of this very shy and retiring character!—Henceforth let no one receive the narratives of Elia for true records! They are, in truth, but shadows of fact—verisimilitudes, not verities—or sitting but upon the remote edges and outskirts of history. He is no such honest chronicler as R. N., and would have done better perhaps to have consulted that gentleman, before he sent these incondite reminiscences to press. But the worthy sub-treasurer—who respects his old and his new masters—would but have been puzzled at the indecorous liberties of Elia. The good man wots not, peradventure, of the license which *Magazines* have arrived at in this plain-speaking age, or hardly dreams of their existence beyond the *Gentleman's*—his furthest monthly excursions in this nature having been long confined to the holy ground of honest *Urban's* obituary. May it be long before his own name shall help to swell those columns of unenvied flattery! —Meantime, O ye New Benchers of the Inner Temple, cherish him kindly, for he is himself the kindliest of human creatures. Should infirmities over-take him—he is yet in

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

green and vigorous senility—make allowances for them, remembering that 'ye yourselves are old.' So may the Winged Horse, your ancient badge and cognisance, still flourish! so may future Hookers and Seldens illustrate your church and chambers! so may the sparrows, in default of more melodious quiristers, unpoisoned hop about your walks! so may the fresh-coloured and cleanly nursery maid, who, by leave, airs her playful charge in your stately gardens, drop her prettiest blushing curtsy as ye pass, reductive of juvenescent emotion! so may the younkers of this generation eye you, pacing your stately terrace, with the same superstitious veneration, with which the [1]child Elia gazed on the Old Worthies that solemnized the parade before ye!

GRACE BEFORE MEAT

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THE custom of saying grace at meals had, probably, its origin in the early times of the world, and the hunter-state of man, when dinners were precarious things, and a full meal was something more than a common blessing; when a belly-full was a windfall, and looked like a special providence. In the shouts and triumphal songs with which, after a season of sharp abstinence, a lucky booty of deer's or goat's flesh would naturally be ushered home, existed, perhaps, the germ of the modern grace. It is not otherwise easy to be understood, why the blessing of food—the act of eating—should have had a particular expression of thanksgiving annexed to it, distinct from that implied and silent gratitude with which we are expected to enter upon the enjoyment of the many other various gifts and good things of existence.

I own that I am disposed to say grace upon twenty other occasions in the course of the day besides my dinner. I want a form for setting out upon a pleasant walk, for a moonlight ramble, for a friendly meeting, or a solved problem. Why have we none for books, those spiritual

[1] *See Editor's Notes.*

repasts—a grace before Milton—a grace before Shakspeare —a devotional exercise proper to be said before reading the Fairy Queen ?—but, the received ritual having prescribed these forms to the solitary ceremony of manducation, I shall confine my observations to the experience which I have had of the grace, properly so called ; commending my new scheme for extension to a niche in the grand philosophical, poetical, and perchance in part heretical, liturgy, now compiling by my friend Homo Humanus, for the use of a certain snug congregation of Utopian Rabelæsian Christians, no matter where assembled.

The form then of the benediction before eating has its beauty at a poor man's table, or at the simple and unprovocative repasts of children. It is here that the grace becomes exceedingly graceful. The indigent man, who hardly knows whether he shall have a meal the next day or not, sits down to his fare with a present sense of the blessings, which can be but feebly acted by the rich, into whose minds the conception of wanting a dinner could never, but by some extreme theory, have entered. The proper end of food—the animal sustenance—is barely contemplated by them. The poor man's bread is his daily bread, literally his bread for the day. Their courses are perennial.

Again, the plainest diet seems the fittest to be preceded by the grace. That which is least stimulative to appetite, leaves the mind most free for foreign considerations. A man may feel thankful, heartily thankful, over a dish of plain mutton with turnips, and have leisure to reflect upon the ordinance and institution of eating ; when he shall confess a perturbation of mind, inconsistent with the purposes of the grace, at the presence of venison or turtle. When I have sate (a *rarus hospes*) at rich men's tables, with the savoury soup and messes steaming up the nostrils, and moistening the lips of the guests with desire and a distracted choice, I have felt the introduction of that ceremony to be unseasonable. With the ravenous orgasm upon you, it seems impertinent to interpose a religious sentiment. It is a confusion of purpose to mutter out praises from a mouth that waters. The heats of epicurism put out the gentle flame of devotion. The incense which rises

round is pagan, and the belly-god intercepts it for his own. The very excess of the provision beyond the needs, takes away all sense of proportion between the end and means. The giver is veiled by his gifts. You are startled at the injustice of returning thanks—for what ?—for having too much, while so many starve. It is to praise the Gods amiss.

I have observed this awkwardness felt, scarce consciously perhaps, by the good man who says the grace. I have seen it in clergymen and others—a sort of shame—a sense of the co-presence of circumstances which unhallow the blessing. After a devotional tone put on for a few seconds, how rapidly the speaker will fall into his common voice, helping himself or his neighbour, as if to get rid of some uneasy sensation of hypocrisy. Not that the good man was a hypocrite, or was not most conscientious in the discharge of the duty ; but he felt in his inmost mind the incompatibility of the scene and the viands before him with the exercise of a calm and rational gratitude.

I hear somebody exclaim,—Would you have Christians sit down at table, like hogs to their troughs, without remembering the Giver ?—no—I would have them sit down as Christians, remembering the Giver, and less like hogs. Or if their appetites must run riot, and they must pamper themselves with [1]delicacies for which east and west are ransacked, I would have them postpone their benediction to a fitter season, when appetite is laid ; when the still small voice can be heard, and the reason of the grace returns—with temperate diet and restricted dishes. Gluttony and surfeiting are no proper occasions for thanksgiving. When Jeshurun waxed fat, we read that he kicked. Virgil knew the harpy-nature better, when he put into the mouth of Celæno any thing but a blessing. We may be gratefully sensible of the deliciousness of some kinds of food beyond others, though that is a meaner and inferior gratitude : but the proper object of the grace is sustenance, not relishes ; daily bread, not delicacies ; the means of life, and not the means of pampering the carcass. With what frame of composure, I wonder, can a city chaplain pronounce his benediction at some great Hall feast, when

[1] delicacies] delicates 1821.

he knows that his last concluding pious word—and that, in all probability, the sacred name which he preaches—is but the signal for so many impatient harpies to commence their foul orgies, with as little sense of true thankfulness (which is temperance) as those Virgilian fowl! It is well if the good man himself does not feel his devotions a little clouded, those foggy sensuous steams mingling with and polluting the pure altar sacrifice.

The severest satire upon full tables and surfeits is the banquet which Satan, in the Paradise Regained, provides for a temptation in the wilderness:

> A table richly spread in regal mode,
> With dishes piled, and meats of noblest sort
> And savour; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
> In pastry built, or from the spit, or boiled,
> Gris-amber-steamed; all fish from sea or shore,
> Freshet or purling brook, for which was drained
> Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.

The Tempter, I warrant you, thought these cates would go down without the recommendatory preface of a benediction. They are like to be short graces where the devil plays the host.—I am afraid the poet wants his usual decorum in this place. Was he thinking of the old Roman luxury, or of a gaudy day at Cambridge? This was a temptation fitter for a Heliogabalus. The whole banquet is too civic and culinary, and the accompaniments altogether a profanation of that deep, abstracted, holy scene. The mighty artillery of sauces, which the cook-fiend conjures up, is out of proportion to the simple wants and plain hunger of the guest. He that disturbed him in his dreams, from his dreams might have been taught better. To the temperate fantasies of the famished Son of God, what sort of feasts presented themselves?—He dreamed indeed,

> ———As appetite is wont to dream,
> Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.

But what meats:—

> Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
> And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
> Food to Elijah bringing, even and morn;
> Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought:
> He saw the prophet also how he fled
> Into the desert, and how there he slept

Under a juniper; then how awaked
He found his supper on the coals prepared,
And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
And ate the second time after repose,
The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
Sometimes, that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.

Nothing in Milton is finelier fancied than these temperate dreams of the divine Hungerer. To which of these two visionary banquets, think you, would the introduction of what is called the grace have been most fitting and pertinent?

Theoretically I am no enemy to graces; but practically I own that (before meat especially) they seem to have something awkward and unseasonable. Our appetites, of one or another kind, are excellent spurs to our reason, which might otherwise but feebly set about the great ends of preserving and continuing the species. They are fit blessings to be contemplated at a distance with a becoming gratitude; but the moment of appetite (the judicious reader will apprehend me) is, perhaps, the least fit season for that exercise. The Quakers who go about their business, of every description, with more calmness than we, have more title to the use of these benedictory prefaces. I have always admired their silent grace, and the more because I have observed their applications to the meat and drink following to be less passionate and sensual than ours. They are neither gluttons nor wine-bibbers as a people. They eat, as a horse bolts his chopt hay, with indifference, calmness, and cleanly circumstances. They neither grease nor slop themselves. When I see a citizen in his bib and tucker, I cannot imagine it a surplice.

I am no Quaker at my food. I confess I am not indifferent to the kinds of it. Those unctuous morsels of deer's flesh were not made to be received with dispassionate services. I hate a man who swallows it, affecting not to know what he is eating. I suspect his taste in higher matters. I shrink instinctively from one who professes to like minced veal. There is a physiognomical character in the tastes for food. C—— holds that a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple-dumplings. I am not certain but he is right. With the decay of my first inno-

cence, I confess a less and less relish daily for those innocuous cates. The whole vegetable tribe have lost their gust with me. Only I stick to asparagus, which still seems to inspire gentle thoughts. I am impatient and querulous under culinary disappointments, as to come home at the dinner hour, for instance, expecting some savoury mess, and to find one quite tasteless and sapidless. Butter ill melted—that commonest of kitchen failures—puts me beside my tenour.—The author of the Rambler used to make inarticulate animal noises over a favourite food. Was this the music quite proper to be preceded by the grace ? or would the pious man have done better to postpone his devotions to a season when the blessing might be contemplated with less perturbation ? I quarrel with no man's tastes, nor would set my thin face against those excellent things, in their way, jollity and feasting. But as these exercises, however laudable, have little in them of grace or gracefulness, a man should be sure, before he ventures so to grace them, that while he is pretending his devotions otherwhere, he is not secretly kissing his hand to some great fish—his Dagon—with a special consecration of no ark but the fat tureen before him. Graces are the sweet preluding strains to the banquets of angels and children ; to the roots and severer repasts of the Chartreuse ; to the slender, but not slenderly acknowledged, refection of the poor and humble man : but at the heaped-up boards of the pampered and the luxurious they become of dissonant mood, less timed and tuned to the occasion, methinks, than the noise of those better befitting organs would be, which children hear tales of, at Hog's Norton. We sit too long at our meals, or are too curious in the study of them, or too disordered in our application to them, or engross too great a portion of those good things (which should be common) to our share, to be able with any grace to say grace. To be thankful for what we grasp exceeding our proportion is to add hypocrisy to injustice. A lurking sense of this truth is what makes the performance of this duty so cold and spiritless a service at most tables. In houses where the grace is as indispensable as the napkin, who has not seen that never settled question arise, as to *who shall say it ;* while the good man of the

house and the visitor clergyman, or some other guest belike of next authority from years or gravity, shall be bandying about the office between them as a matter of compliment, each of them not unwilling to shift the awkward burthen of an equivocal duty from his own shoulders ?

I once drank tea in company with two Methodist divines of different persuasions, whom it was my fortune to introduce to each other for the first time that evening. Before the first cup was handed round, one of these reverend gentlemen put it to the other, with all due solemnity, whether he chose to *say any thing*. It seems it is the custom with some sectaries to put up a short prayer before this meal also. His reverend brother did not at first quite apprehend him, but upon an explanation, with little less importance he made answer, that it was not a custom known in his church : in which courteous evasion the other acquiescing for good manner's sake, or in compliance with a weak brother, the supplementary or tea-grace was waived altogether. With what spirit might not Lucian have painted two priests, of *his* religion, playing into each other's hands the compliment of performing or omitting a sacrifice,—the hungry God meantime, doubtful of his incense, with expectant nostrils hovering over the two flamens, and (as between two stools) going away in the end without his supper.

A short form upon these occasions is felt to want reverence ; a long one, I am afraid, cannot escape the charge of impertinence. I do not quite approve of the epigrammatic conciseness with which that equivocal wag (but my pleasant school-fellow) C. V. L., when importuned for a grace, used to inquire, first slyly leering down the table, 'Is there no clergyman here ?'—significantly adding, 'thank G—.' Nor do I think our old form at school quite pertinent, where we were used to preface our bald bread and cheese suppers with a preamble, connecting with that humble blessing a recognition of benefits the most awful and overwhelming to the imagination which religion has to offer. *Non tunc illis erat locus.* I remember we were put to it to reconcile the phrase 'good creatures', upon which the blessing rested, with the fare set before us, wilfully understanding that expression in a low and animal

sense,—till some one recalled a legend, which told how in the golden days of Christ's, the young Hospitallers were wont to have smoking joints of roast meat upon their nightly boards, till some pious benefactor, commiserating the decencies, rather than the palates, of the children, commuted our flesh for garments, and gave us—*horresco referens*—trowsers instead of mutton.

MY FIRST PLAY

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. iv, no. xxiv, p. 603 (Dec., 1821). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

At the north end of [1]Cross-court there yet stands a portal, of some architectural pretensions, though reduced to humble use, serving at present for an entrance to a [2]printing-office. This old door-way, if you are young, reader, you may not know was the identical pit entrance to Old Drury—Garrick's Drury—all of it that is left. I never pass it without shaking some forty years from off my shoulders, recurring to the evening when I passed through it to see *my first play*. The afternoon had been wet, and the condition of our going (the elder folks and myself) was, that the rain should cease. With what a beating heart did I watch from the window the puddles, from the stillness of which I was taught to prognosticate the desired cessation! I seem to remember the last spurt, and the glee with which I ran to announce it.

We went with orders, which my godfather [3]F. had sent us. He kept the oil shop (now Davies's) at the corner of Featherstone-building, in Holborn. F. was a tall grave person, lofty in speech, and had pretensions above his rank. He associated in those days with John Palmer, the comedian, whose gait and bearing he seemed to copy; if John (which is quite as likely) did not rather borrow somewhat of his manner from my godfather. He was also known to, and visited by, Sheridan. It was to his house in Holborn that young Brinsley brought his first wife

[1] Cross] Russell 1821. [2] printing-office] winevault 1821. [3] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

on her elopement with him from a boarding-school at Bath—the beautiful Maria Linley. My parents were present (over a quadrille table) when he arrived in the evening with his harmonious charge.—From either of these connexions it may be inferred that my godfather could command an order for the then Drury-lane theatre at pleasure—and, indeed, a pretty liberal issue of those cheap billets, in Brinsley's autograph, I have heard him say was the sole remuneration which he had received for many years' nightly illumination of the orchestra and various avenues of that theatre—and he was content it should be so. The honour of Sheridan's familiarity—or supposed familiarity—was better to my godfather than money.

F. was the most gentlemanly of oilmen ; grandiloquent, yet courteous. His delivery of the commonest matters of fact was Ciceronian. He had two Latin words almost constantly in his mouth (how odd sounds Latin from an oilman's lips !), which my better knowledge since has enabled me to correct. In strict pronunciation they should have been sounded *vice versa*—but in those young years they impressed me with more awe than they would now do, read aright from Seneca or Varro—in his own peculiar pronunciation, monosyllabically elaborated, or Anglicized, into something like *verse verse*. By an imposing manner, and the help of these distorted syllables, he climbed (but that was little) to the highest parochial honours which St. Andrew's has to bestow.

He is dead—and thus much I thought due to his memory, both for my first orders (little wondrous talismans !—slight keys, and insignificant to outward sight, but opening to me more than Arabian paradises !) and moreover, that by his testamentary beneficence I came into possession of the only landed property which I could ever call my own—situate near the road-way village of pleasant Puckeridge, in Hertfordshire. When I journeyed down to take possession, and planted foot on my own ground, the stately habits of the donor descended upon me, and I strode (shall I confess the vanity ?) with larger paces over my allotment of three quarters of an acre, with its commodious mansion in the midst, with the feeling of an

English freeholder that all betwixt sky and centre was my own. The estate has passed into more prudent hands, and nothing but an agrarian can restore it.

In those days were pit orders. Beshrew the uncomfortable manager who abolished them !—with one of these we went. I remember the waiting at the door—not that which is left—but between that and an inner door in shelter—O when shall I be such an expectant again !—with the cry of nonpareils, an indispensable play-house accompaniment in those days. As near as I can recollect, the fashionable pronunciation of the theatrical fruiteresses then was, 'Chase some oranges, chase some numparels, chase a bill of the play ;'—chase *pro* chuse. But when we got in, and I beheld the green curtain that veiled a heaven to my imagination, which was soon to be disclosed ——the breathless anticipations I endured ! I had seen something like it in the plate prefixed to Troilus and Cressida, in Rowe's Shakspeare—the tent scene with Diomede—and a sight of that plate can always bring back in a measure the feeling of that evening.—The boxes at that time, full of well-dressed women of quality, projected over the pit ; and the pilasters reaching down were adorned with a glistering substance (I know not what) under glass (as it seemed), resembling—a homely fancy—but I judged it to be sugar-candy—yet, to my raised imagination, divested of its homelier qualities, it appeared a glorified candy !—The orchestra lights at length arose, those 'fair Auroras !' Once the bell sounded. It was to ring out yet once again—and, incapable of the anticipation, I reposed my shut eyes in a sort of resignation upon the maternal lap. It rang the second time. The curtain drew up—I was not past six years old—and the play was Artaxerxes !

I had dabbled a little in the Universal History—the ancient part of it—and here was the court of Persia. It was being admitted to a sight of the past. I took no proper interest in the action going on, for I understood not its import—but I heard the word Darius, and I was in the midst of Daniel. All feeling was absorbed in vision. Gorgeous vests, gardens, palaces, princesses, passéd before me. I knew not players. I was in Persepolis for the

time; and the burning idol of their [1]devotion almost converted me into a worshipper. I was awe-struck, and believed those significations to be something more than elemental fires. [2]It was all enchantment and a dream. No such pleasure has since visited me but in dreams.—Harlequin's Invasion followed; where, I remember, the transformation of the magistrates into reverend beldams seemed to me a piece of grave historic justice, and the tailor carrying his own head to be as sober a verity as the legend of St. Denys.

The next play to which I was taken was the Lady of the Manor, of which, with the exception of some scenery, very faint traces are left in my memory. It was followed by a pantomime, called Lun's Ghost—a satiric touch, I apprehend, upon Rich, not long since dead—but to my apprehension (too sincere for satire), Lun was as remote a piece of antiquity as Lud—the father of a line of Harlequins—transmitting his dagger of lath (the wooden sceptre) through countless ages. I saw the primeval Motley come from his silent tomb in a ghastly vest of white patch-work, like the apparition of a dead rainbow. So Harlequins (thought I) look when they are dead.

My third play followed in quick succession. It was the Way of the World. I think I must have sat at it as grave as a judge; for, I remember, the hysteric affectations of good Lady Wishfort affected me like some solemn tragic passion. Robinson Crusoe followed; in which Crusoe, man Friday, and the parrot, were as good and authentic as in the story.—The clownery and pantaloonery of these pantomimes have clean passed out of my head. I believe, I no more laughed at them, than at the same age I should have been disposed to laugh at the grotesque Gothic heads (seeming to me then replete with devout meaning) that gape, and grin, in stone around the inside of the old Round Church (my church) of the Templars.

I saw these plays in the season 1781–2, when I was from six to seven years old. After the intervention of six or seven other years (for at school all play-going was inhibited)

[1] devotion . . . believed] devotions was as if the sun itself should have been brought down to minister at the sacrificial altar. I took 1821. [2] It was all . . . but in dreams.—*omit* 1821.

I again entered the doors of a theatre. That old Artaxerxes evening had never done ringing in my fancy. I expected the same feelings to come again with the same occasion. But we differ from ourselves less at sixty and sixteen, than the latter does from six. In that interval what had I not lost! At the first period I knew nothing, understood nothing, discriminated nothing. I felt all, loved all, wondered all—

Was nourished, I could not tell how—

I had left the temple a devotee, and was returned a rationalist. The same things were there materially; but the emblem, the reference, was gone!—The green curtain was no longer a veil, drawn between two worlds, the unfolding of which was to bring back past ages, to present 'a royal ghost',—but a certain quantity of green baize, which was to separate the audience for a given time from certain of their fellow-men who were to come forward and pretend those parts. The lights—the orchestra lights—came up a clumsy machinery. The first ring, and the second ring, was now but a trick of the prompter's bell—which had been, like the note of the cuckoo, a phantom of a voice, no hand seen or guessed at which ministered to its warning. The actors were men and women painted. I thought the fault was in them; but it was in myself, and the alteration which those many centuries—of six short twelve-months had wrought in me.—Perhaps it was fortunate for me that the play of the evening was but an indifferent comedy, as it gave me time to crop some unreasonable expectations, which might have interfered with the genuine emotions with [1]which I was soon after enabled to enter upon the first appearance to me of Mrs. Siddons in Isabella. Comparison and retrospection soon yielded to the present attraction of the scene; and the theatre became to me, upon a new stock, the most delightful of recreations.

[1] which I] which (with unmixed perception) I 1821.

DREAM-CHILDREN;

A Reverie

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. v, no. xxv, p. 21 (Jan., 1822). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

Children love to listen to stories about their elders when *they* were children; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle, or grandame whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene—so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country—of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by every body, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as

to say, ' that would be foolish indeed.' And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighbourhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman ; so good indeed that she knew all the Psaltery by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was ; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer—here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till, upon my looking grave, it desisted—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain ; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house ; and how she believed that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept, but she said ' those innocents would do her no harm ' ; and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eye-brows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grand-children, having us to the great-house in the holydays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the Twelve Cæsars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them ; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken pannels, with the gilding almost rubbed out—sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and

then,—and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for nothing but to look at—or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fish-pond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pike hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it mocked at their impertinent friskings,—I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of peaches, nectarines, oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grandmother Field loved all her grand-children, yet in an especial manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us ; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of every body, but of their great-grandmother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain;—and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient, and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed ; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such

a distance there is betwixt life and death ; and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me ; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes) rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he their poor uncle must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W—n ; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens—when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was ; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech : ' We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice called Bartrum father. We are nothing ; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we have existence, and a name '——and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side—but John L. (or James Elia) was gone for ever.

DISTANT CORRESPONDENTS

In a Letter to [1]B. F. Esq. at Sydney, New South Wales

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. v, no. xxvii, p. 282 (Mar., 1822). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

My dear F.—When I think how welcome the sight of a letter from the world where you were born must be to you in that strange one to which you have been transplanted, I feel some compunctious visitings at my long silence. But, indeed, it is no easy effort to set about a correspondence at our distance. The weary world of waters between us oppresses the imagination. It is difficult to conceive how a scrawl of mine should ever stretch across it. It is a sort of presumption to expect that one's thoughts should live so far. It is like writing for posterity; and reminds me of one of Mrs. Rowe's superscriptions, 'Alcander to Strephon, in the shades.' Cowley's Post-Angel is no more than would be expedient in such an intercourse. One drops a packet at Lombard-street, and in twenty-four hours a friend in Cumberland gets it as fresh as if it came in ice. It is only like whispering through a long trumpet. But suppose a tube let down from the moon, with yourself at one end, and *the man* at the other; it would be some balk to the spirit of conversation, if you knew that the dialogue exchanged with that interesting theosophist would take two or three revolutions of a higher luminary in its passage. Yet for aught I know, you may be some parasangs nigher that primitive idea—Plato's man—than we in England here have the honour to reckon ourselves.

Epistolary matter usually compriseth three topics; news, sentiment, and puns. In the latter, I include all non-serious subjects; or subjects serious in themselves, but treated after my fashion, non-seriously.—And first, for news. In them the most desirable circumstance, I suppose, is that they shall be true. But what security can I have that what I now send you for truth shall not before you get it unaccountably turn into a lie? For instance, our mutual friend P. is at this present writing—*my Now*—in good

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

health, and enjoys a fair share of worldly reputation. You are glad to hear it. This is natural and friendly. But at this present reading—*your Now*—he may possibly be in the Bench, or going to be hanged, which in reason ought to abate something of your transport (*i.e.* at hearing he was well, &c.), or at least considerably to modify it. I am going to the play this evening, to have a laugh with [1]Munden. You have no theatre, I think you told me, in your land of d——d realities. You naturally lick your lips, and envy me my felicity. Think but a moment, and you will correct the hateful emotion. Why, it is Sunday morning with you, and 1823. This confusion of tenses, this grand solecism of *two presents*, is in a degree common to all postage. But if I sent you word to Bath or the Devizes, that I was expecting the aforesaid treat this evening, though at the moment you received the intelligence my full feast of fun would be over, yet there would be for a day or two after, as you would well know, a smack, a relish left upon my mental palate, which would give rational encouragement [2]for you to foster a portion at least of the disagreeable passion, which it was in part my intention to produce. But ten months hence your envy or your sympathy would be as useless as a passion spent upon the dead. Not only does truth, in these long intervals, un-essence herself, but (what is harder) one cannot venture a crude fiction for the fear that it may ripen into a truth upon the voyage. What a wild improbable banter I put upon you some three years since——of Will Weatherall having married a servant-maid! I remember gravely consulting you how we were to receive her—for Will's wife was in no case to be rejected; and your no less serious replication in the matter; how tenderly you advised an abstemious introduction of literary topics before the lady, with a caution not to be too forward in bringing on the carpet matters more within the sphere of her intelligence; your deliberate judgement, or rather wise suspension of sentence, how far jacks, and spits, and mops, could with propriety be introduced as subjects; whether the conscious avoiding of all such matters in discourse would not have a worse look than the taking of them casually in our way; in what manner we should carry

[1] Munden.] Joey Munden. 1822. [2] for] to 1822.

ourselves to our maid Becky, Mrs. William Weatherall being by; whether we should show more delicacy, and a truer sense of respect for Will's wife, by treating Becky with our customary chiding before her, or by an unusual deferential civility paid to Becky as to a person of great worth, but thrown by the caprice of fate into a humble station. There were difficulties, I remember, on both sides, which you did me the favour to state with the precision of a lawyer, united to the tenderness of a friend. I laughed in my sleeve at your solemn pleadings, when lo! while I was valuing myself upon this flam put upon you in New South Wales, the devil in England, jealous possibly of any lie-children not his own, or working after my copy, has actually instigated our friend (not three days since) to the commission of a matrimony, which I had only conjured up for your diversion. William Weatherall has married Mrs. Cotterel's maid. But to take it in its truest sense, you will see, my dear F., that news from me must become history to you; which I neither profess to write, nor indeed care much for reading. No person, under a diviner, can with any prospect of veracity conduct a correspondence at such an arm's length. Two prophets, indeed, might thus interchange intelligence with effect; the epoch of the writer (Habbakuk) falling in with the true present time of the receiver (Daniel); but then we are no prophets.

Then as to sentiment. It fares little better with that. This kind of dish, above all, requires to be served up hot; or sent off in water-plates, that your friend may have it almost as warm as yourself. If it have time to cool, it is the most tasteless of all cold meats. I have often smiled at a conceit of the late [1]Lord C. It seems that travelling somewhere about Geneva, he came to some pretty green spot, or nook, where a willow, or something, hung so fantastically and invitingly over a stream—was it?—or a rock?—no matter—but the stillness and the repose, after a weary journey 'tis likely, in a languid moment of his lordship's hot restless life, so took his fancy, that he could imagine no place so proper, in the event of his death, to lay his bones in. This was all very natural and excusable as a sentiment, and shows his character in a very pleasing

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

light. But when from a passing sentiment it came to be an act; and when, by a positive testamentary disposal, his remains were actually carried all that way from England; who was there, some desperate sentimentalists excepted, that did not ask the question, Why could not his lordship have found a spot as solitary, a nook as romantic, a tree as green and pendent, with a stream as emblematic to his purpose, in Surrey, in Dorset, or in Devon? Conceive the sentiment, [1]boarded up, freighted, entered at the Custom House (startling the tide-waiters with the novelty); hoisted into a ship. Conceive it pawed about and handled between the rude jests of tarpaulin ruffians—a thing of its delicate texture—the salt bilge wetting it till it became as vapid as a damaged lustring. Suppose it in material danger (mariners have some superstition about sentiments) of being tossed over in a fresh gale to some propitiatory shark (spirit of Saint Gothard, save us from a quietus so foreign to the deviser's purpose!) but it has happily evaded a fishy consummation. Trace it then to its lucky landing—at Lyons shall we say?—I have not the map before me—jostled upon four men's shoulders—baiting at this town—stopping to refresh at t'other village—waiting a passport here, a license there; the sanction of the magistracy in this district, the concurrence of the ecclesiastics in that canton; till at length it arrives at its destination, tired out and jaded, from a brisk sentiment, into a feature of silly pride or tawdry senseless affectation. How few sentiments, my dear F., I am afraid we can set down, in the sailor's phrase, as quite sea-worthy.

Lastly, as to the agreeable levities, which, though contemptible in bulk, are the twinkling corpuscula which should irradiate a right friendly epistle—your puns and small jests are, I apprehend, extremely circumscribed in their sphere of action. They are so far from a capacity of being packed up and sent beyond sea, they will scarce endure to be transported by hand from this room to the next. Their vigour is as the instant of their birth. Their nutriment for their brief existence is the intellectual atmosphere of the bystanders: or this last, is the fine slime of Nilus—the *melior lutus*,—whose maternal recipiency is as necessary as

[1] boarded] hoarded 1822.

the *sol pater* to their equivocal generation. A pun hath a hearty kind of present ear-kissing smack with it; you can no more transmit it in its pristine flavour, than you can send a kiss.—Have you not tried in some instances to palm off a yesterday's pun upon a gentleman, and has it answered? Not but it was new to his hearing, but it did not seem to come new from you. It did not hitch in. It was like picking up at a village ale-house a two days old newspaper. You have not seen it before, but you resent the stale thing as an affront. This sort of merchandise above all requires a quick return. A pun, and its recognitory laugh, must be co-instantaneous. The one is the brisk lightning, the other the fierce thunder. A moment's interval, and the link is snapped. A pun is reflected from a friend's face as from a mirror. Who would consult his sweet visnomy, if the polished surface were two or three minutes (not to speak of twelve-months, my dear F.) in giving back its copy?

I cannot image to myself whereabout you are. When I try to fix it, Peter Wilkins's island comes across me. Sometimes you seem to be in the *Hades* of *Thieves*. I see Diogenes prying among you with his perpetual fruitless lantern. What must you be willing by this time to give for the sight of an honest man! You must almost have forgotten how *we* look. And tell me, what your Sydneyites do? are they th**v*ng all day long? Merciful heaven! what property can stand against such a depredation! The kangaroos—your Aborigines—do they keep their primitive simplicity un-Europe-tainted, with those little short forepuds, looking like a lesson framed by nature to the pickpocket! Marry, for diving into fobs they are rather lamely provided *a priori;* but if the hue and cry were once up, they would shew as fair a pair of hindshifters as the expertest loco-motor in the colony.—We hear the most improbable tales at this distance. Pray, is it true that the young Spartans among you are born with six fingers, which spoils their scanning?—It must look very odd; but use reconciles. For their scansion, it is less to be regretted, for if they take it into their heads to be poets, it is odds but they turn out, the greater part of them, vile plagiarists.—Is there much difference to see to between the son of a th**f, and

the grandson ? or where does the taint stop ? Do you bleach in three or in four generations ?—I have many questions to put, but ten Delphic voyages can be made in a shorter time than it will take to satisfy my scruples.—Do you grow your own hemp ?—What is your staple trade, exclusive of the national profession, I mean ? Your lock-smiths, I take it, are some of your great capitalists.

I am insensibly chatting to you as familiarly as when we used to exchange good-morrows out of our old contiguous windows, in pump-famed Hare-court in the Temple. Why did you ever leave that quiet corner ?—Why did I ?—with its complement of four poor elms, from whose smoke-dyed barks, the theme of jesting ruralists, I picked my first lady-birds ! My heart is as dry as that spring sometimes proves in a thirsty August, when I revert to the space that is between us ; a length of passage enough to render obsolete the phrases of our English letters before they can reach you. But while I talk, I think you hear me,—thoughts dallying with vain surmise—

> Aye me ! while thee the seas and sounding shores
> Hold far away.

Come back, before I am grown into a very old man, so as you shall hardly know me. Come, before Bridget walks on crutches. Girls whom you left children have become sage matrons, while you are tarrying there. The blooming Miss W—r (you remember [1]Sally W—r) called upon us yesterday, an aged crone. Folks, whom you knew, die off every year. Formerly, I thought that death was wearing out,—I stood ramparted about with so many healthy friends. The departure of [1]J. W., two springs back corrected my delusion. Since then the old divorcer has been busy. If you do not make haste to return, there will be little left to greet you, of me, or [2]mine.

[1] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.* [2] mine.] mine. Something of home matters I could add ; but *that*, with certain remembrances, never to be omitted, I reserve for the grave postscript to this light epistle ; which postscript, for weighty reasons, justificatory in any court of feeling, I think better omitted in this first edition. | *London*, March 1, 1822 [1822 *only*].

THE PRAISE OF CHIMNEY-SWEEPERS

[Printed under the title *The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers : A May-day Effusion*, in *The London Magazine*, vol. v, no. xxix, p. 405 (May, 1822). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

I LIKE to meet a sweep—understand me—not a grown sweeper—old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive—but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigritude, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek—such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the *peep peep* of a young sparrow ; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aerial ascents not seldom anticipating the sun-rise ?

I have a kindly yearning toward these dim specks—poor blots—innocent blacknesses—

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth—these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption ; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation ! to see a chit no bigger than one's-self enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *fauces Averni*—to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades !—to shudder with the idea that ' now, surely, he must be lost for ever ' !—to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered day-light—and then (O fulness of delight) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel ! I seem to remember having been told, that a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle certainly ; not much unlike the old stage direction in Macbeth, where the ' Apparition of a child crowned with a tree in his hand rises '.

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny. It is better

to give him two-pence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.

There is a composition, the groundwork of which I have understood to be the sweet wood 'yclept sassafras. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this 'wholesome and pleasant beverage', on the south side of Fleet-street, as thou approachest Bridge-street—*the only Salopian house*,—I have never yet adventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients—a cautious premonition to the olfactories constantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegances, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformation of the organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper—whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften the fuliginous concretions, which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners; or whether Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive—but so it is, that no possible taste or odour to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals—cats—when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasteth, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house;* yet be it known to thee,

reader—if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou art haply ignorant of the fact—he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savoury mess to humbler customers, at that dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan leaving his bed to resume the premature labours of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honours of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen-fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odours. The rake, who wisheth to dissipate his o'er-night vapours in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

This is *Saloop*—the precocious herb-woman's darling—the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammersmith to Covent-garden's famed piazzas—the delight, and, oh I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldest thou haply encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three half-pennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny)—so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'er-charged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter volume to the welkin—so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingredienced soups—nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney*, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket!

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts; the jeers and taunts of the populace; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularity of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness.—In the last winter but one, pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough—yet outwardly trying to face

it down, as if nothing had happened—when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth——but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him?) in the March to Finchley, grinning at the pye-man——there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last for ever—with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth—for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it—that I could have been content, if the honour of a gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt and his mockery till midnight.

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy lips (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket, presumably holding such jewels; but, methinks, they should take leave to 'air' them as frugally as possible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me their teeth, show me bones. Yet must I confess, that from the mouth of a true sweep a display (even to ostentation) of those white and shining ossifications, strikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and an allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when

> A sable cloud
> Turns forth her silver lining on the night.

It is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct; a badge of better days; a hint of nobility:—and, doubtless, under the obscuring darkness and double night of their forlorn disguisement, oftentimes lurketh good blood, and gentle conditions, derived from lost ancestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The premature apprenticements of these tender victims give but too much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine, and almost infantile abductions; the seeds of civility and true courtesy, so often discernible in these young grafts (not otherwise to be accounted for) plainly hint at some forced adoptions; many noble Rachels mourning for their children,

even in our days, countenance the fact; the tales of fairy-spiriting may shadow a lamentable verity, and the recovery of the young Montagu be but a solitary instance of good fortune, out of many irreparable and hopeless *defiliations*.

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few years since—under a ducal canopy—(that seat of the Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly for its beds, in which the late duke was especially a connoisseur)—encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets inwoven—folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius—was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noon-day, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which he there saw exhibited; so, creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle.—But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I have just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty, as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions—is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to be lapt by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was now but creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*, and resting-place.—By no other theory, than by this sentiment of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed, upon

any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend JEM WHITE was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew. Cards were issued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would get in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate wight, indeed, who, relying upon his dusky soot, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quoited out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed. The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity; but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlours three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savour. JAMES WHITE, as head waiter, had charge of the first table; and myself, with our trusty companion BIGOD, ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clambering and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table—for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humours of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honour the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing 'the gentleman', and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave,

while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable younkers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings—how he would fit the tit bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors—how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it ' must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman's eating '—how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony,—how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good, he should lose their custom ; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts—' The King ',—the ' Cloth ',—which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering ; —and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, ' May the Brush supersede the Laurel ! ' All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a ' Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so,' which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans ; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savouriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

> Golden lads and lasses must,
> As chimney-sweepers, come to dust—

James White is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died—of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens ; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield departed for ever.

A COMPLAINT OF THE DECAY OF BEGGARS IN THE METROPOLIS

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. v, no. xxx, p. 532 (June, 1822). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

THE all-sweeping besom of societarian reformation—your only modern Alcides' club to rid the time of its abuses—is uplift with many-handed sway to extirpate the last fluttering tatters of the bugbear MENDICITY from the metropolis. Scrips, wallets, bags—staves, dogs, and crutches—the whole mendicant fraternity with all their baggage are fast posting out of the purlieus of this eleventh persecution. From the crowded crossing, from the corners of streets and turnings of alleys, the parting Genius of Beggary is 'with sighing sent.'

I do not approve of this wholesale going to work, this impertinent crusado, or *bellum ad exterminationem*, proclaimed against a species. Much good might be sucked from these Beggars.

They were the oldest and the honourablest form of pauperism. Their appeals were to our common nature; less revolting to an ingenuous mind than to be a suppliant to the particular humours or caprice of any fellow-creature, or set of fellow-creatures, parochial or societarian. Theirs were the only rates uninvidious in the levy, ungrudged in the assessment.

There was a dignity springing from the very depth of their desolation; as to be naked is to be so much nearer to the being a man, than to go in livery.

The greatest spirits have felt this in their reverses; and when Dionysius from king turned schoolmaster, do we feel any thing towards him but contempt? Could Vandyke have made a picture of him, swaying a ferula for a sceptre, which would have affected our minds with the same heroic pity, the same compassionate admiration, with which we regard his Belisarius begging for an *obolum*? Would the moral have been more graceful, more pathetic?

The Blind Beggar in the legend—the father of pretty Bessy—whose story doggrel rhymes and ale-house signs cannot so degrade or attentuate, but that some sparks of

a lustrous spirit will shine through the disguisements—this noble Earl of [1]Cornwall (as indeed he was) and memorable sport of fortune, fleeing from the unjust sentence of his liege lord, stript of all, and seated on the flowering green of Bethnal, with his more fresh and springing daughter by his side, illumining his rags and his beggary—would the child and parent have cut a better figure, doing the honours of a counter, or expiating their fallen condition upon the three-foot eminence of some sempstering shop-board ?

In tale or history your Beggar is ever the just antipode to your King. The poets and romancical writers (as dear Margaret Newcastle would call them) when they would most sharply and feelingly paint a reverse of fortune, never stop till they have brought down their hero in good earnest to rags and the wallet. The depth of the descent illustrates the height he falls from. There is no medium which can be presented to the imagination without offence. There is no breaking the fall. Lear, thrown from his palace, must divest him of his garments, till he answer ' mere nature ' ; and Cresseid, fallen from a prince's love, must extend her pale arms, pale with other whiteness than of beauty, supplicating lazar alms with bell and clap-dish.

The Lucian wits knew this very well ; and, with a [2]converse policy, when they would express scorn of greatness without the pity, they show us an Alexander in the shades cobbling shoes, or a Semiramis getting up foul linen.

How would it sound in song, that a great monarch had declined his affections upon the daughter of a baker ! yet do we feel the imagination at all violated when we read the ' true ballad ', where King Cophetua wooes the beggar maid ?

Pauperism, pauper, poor man, are expressions of pity, but pity alloyed with contempt. No one properly contemns a beggar. Poverty is a comparative thing, and each degree of it is mocked by its [a]' neighbour grice '. Its poor rents and comings-in are soon summed up and told. Its pretences to property are almost ludicrous. Its pitiful attempts to save excite a smile. Every scornful

[a] Timon of Athens [1822 *only*].

[1] Cornwall] Flanders 1822. [2] converse] opposite 1822.

companion can weigh his trifle-bigger purse against it. Poor man reproaches poor man in the streets with impolitic mention of his condition, his own being a shade better, while the rich pass by and jeer at both. No rascally comparative insults a Beggar, or thinks of weighing purses with him. He is not in the scale of comparison. He is not under the measure of property. He confessedly hath none, any more than a dog or a sheep. No one twitteth him with ostentation above his means. No one accuses him of pride, or upbraideth him with mock humility. None jostle with him for the wall, or pick quarrels for precedency. No wealthy neighbour seeketh to eject him from his tenement. No man sues him. No man goes to law with him. If I were not the independent gentleman that I am, rather than I would be a retainer to the great, a led captain, or a poor relation, I would choose, out of the delicacy and true greatness of my mind, to be a Beggar.

Rags, which are the reproach of poverty, are the Beggar's robes, and graceful *insignia* of his profession, his tenure, his full dress, the suit in which he is expected to show himself in public. He is never out of the fashion, or limpeth awkwardly behind it. He is not required to put on court mourning. He weareth all colours, fearing none. His costume hath undergone less change than the [1]Quaker's. He is the only man in the universe who is not obliged to study appearances. The ups and downs of the world concern him no longer. He alone continueth in one stay. The price of stock or land affecteth him not. The fluctuations of agricultural or commercial prosperity touch him not, or at worst but change his customers. He is not expected to become bail or surety for any one. No man troubleth him with questioning his religion or politics. He is the only free man in the universe.

The Mendicants of this great city were so many of her sights, her lions. I can no more spare them than I could the Cries of London. No corner of a street is complete without them. They are as indispensable as the Ballad Singer; and in their picturesque attire as ornamental as the Signs of old London. They were the standing morals,

[1] Quaker's. He is] Quaker's. His coat is coeval with Adam's. He is 1822.

emblems, mementos, dial-mottos, the spital sermons, the books for children, the salutary checks and pauses to the high and rushing tide of greasy citizenry—

——Look
Upon that poor and broken bankrupt there.

Above all, those old blind Tobits that used to line the wall of Lincoln's Inn Garden, before modern fastidiousness had expelled them, casting up their ruined orbs to catch a ray of pity, and (if possible) of light, with their faithful Dog Guide at their feet,—whither are they fled ? or into what corners, blind as themselves, have they been driven, out of the wholesome air and sun-warmth ? immersed between four walls, in what withering poor-house do they endure the penalty of double darkness, where the chink of the dropt half-penny no more consoles their forlorn bereavement, far from the sound of the cheerful and hope-stirring tread of the passenger ? Where hang their useless [1]staves ? and who will farm their dogs ?—Have the overseers of [2]St. L—— caused them to be shot ? or were they tied up in sacks, and dropt into the Thames, at the suggestion of [2]B——, the mild rector of —— ?

Well fare the soul of unfastidious Vincent Bourne, most classical, and at the same time, most English, of the Latinists !—who has treated of this human and quadrupedal alliance, this dog and man friendship, in the sweetest of his poems, the *Epitaphium in Canem*, or, *Dog's Epitaph*. Reader, peruse it ; and say, if customary sights, which could call up such gentle poetry as this, were of a nature to do more harm or good to the moral sense of the passengers through the daily thoroughfares of a vast and busy metropolis.

Pauperis hic Iri requiesco Lyciscus, herilis,
Dum vixi, tutela vigil columenque senectae,
Dux caeco fidus : nec, me ducente, solebat,
Praetenso hinc atque hinc baculo, per iniqua locorum
Incertam explorare viam ; sed fila secutus,
Quae dubios regerent passûs, vestigia tuta
Fixit inoffenso gressu ; gelidumque sedile
In nudo nactus saxo, quà praetereuntium
Unda frequens confluxit, ibi miserisque tenebras

[1] staves] crutches 1822. [2] *See Editor's Note on 'The South-Sea House'.*

Lamentis, noctemque oculis ploravit obortam.
Ploravit nec frustra; obolum dedit alter et alter,
Queis corda et mentem indiderat natura benignam.
Ad latus interea jacui sopitus herile,
Vel mediis vigil in somnis; ad herilia jussa
Auresque atque animum arrectus, seu frustula amicè
Porrexit sociasque dapes, seu longa diei
Taedia perpessus, reditum sub nocte parabat.
Hi mores, haec vita fuit, dum fata sinebant,
Dum neque languebam morbis, nec inerte senectâ;
Quae tandem obrepsit, veterique satellite caecum
Orbavit dominum: prisci sed gratia facti
Ne tota intereat, longos deleta per annos,
Exiguum hunc Irus tumulum de cespite fecit,
Etsi inopis, non ingratae, munuscula dextrae;
Carmine signavitque brevi, dominumque canemque
Quod memoret, fidumque canem dominumque benignum.

Poor Irus' faithful wolf-dog here I lie,
That wont to tend my old blind master's steps,
His guide and guard: nor, while my service lasted,
Had he occasion for that staff, with which
He now goes picking out his path in fear
Over the highways and crossings; but would plant,
Safe in the conduct of my friendly string,
A firm foot forward still, till he had reach'd
His poor seat on some stone, nigh where the tide
Of passers by in thickest confluence flow'd:
To whom with loud and passionate laments
From morn to eve his dark estate he wail'd.
Nor wail'd to all in vain: some here and there,
The well-disposed and good, their pennies gave.
I meantime at his feet obsequious slept;
Not all-asleep in sleep, but heart and ear
Prick'd up at his least motion; to receive
At his kind hand my customary crums,
And common portion in his feast of scraps;
Or when night warn'd us homeward, tired and spent
With our long day and tedious beggary.
These were my manners, this my way of life,
Till age and slow disease me overtook,
And sever'd from my sightless master's side.
But lest the grace of so good deeds should die,
Through tract of years in mute oblivion lost,
This slender tomb of turf hath Irus reared,
Cheap monument of an ungrudging hand,
And with short verse inscribed it, to attest,
In long and lasting union to attest,
The virtues of the Beggar and his Dog.

These dim eyes have in vain explored for some months

past a well-known figure, or part of the figure, of a man, who used to glide his comely upper half over the pavements of London, wheeling along with most ingenious celerity upon a machine of wood; a spectacle to natives, to foreigners, and to children. He was of a robust make, with a florid sailor-like complexion, and his head was bare to the storm and sunshine. He was a natural curiosity, a speculation to the scientific, a prodigy to the simple. The infant would stare at the mighty man brought down to his own level. The common cripple would despise his own pusillanimity, viewing the hale stoutness, and hearty heart, of this half-limbed giant. Few but must have noticed him; for the accident, which brought him low, took place during the riots of 1780, and he has been a groundling so long. He seemed earth-born, an Antæus, and to suck in fresh vigour from the soil which he neighboured. He was a grand fragment; as good as an Elgin marble. The nature, which should have recruited his reft legs and thighs, was not lost, but only retired into his upper parts, and he was half a Hercules. I heard a tremendous voice thundering and growling, as before an earthquake, and casting down my eyes, it was this mandrake reviling a steed that had started at his portentous appearance. He seemed to want but his just stature to have rent the offending quadruped in shivers. He was as the man-part of a Centaur, from which the horse-half had been cloven in some dire Lapithan controversy. He moved on, as if he could have made shift with yet half of the body-portion which was left him. The *os sublime* was not wanting; and he threw out yet a jolly countenance upon the heavens. Forty-and-two years had he driven this out of door trade, and now that his hair is grizzled in the service, but his good spirits no way impaired, because he is not content to exchange his free air and exercise for the restraints of a poor-house, he is expiating his contumacy in one of those houses (ironically christened) of Correction.

Was a daily spectacle like this to be deemed a nuisance, which called for legal interference to remove? or not rather a salutary and a touching object, to the passers-by in a great city? Among her shows, her museums, and supplies for ever-gaping curiosity (and what else but an

accumulation of sights—endless sights—*is* a great city; or for what else is it desirable ?) was there not room for one *Lusus* (not *Naturæ*, indeed, but) *Accidentium ?* What if in forty-and-two years' going about, the man had scraped together enough to give a portion to his child (as the rumour ran) of a few hundreds—whom had he injured ?—whom had he imposed upon ? The contributors had enjoyed their *sight* for their pennies. What if after being exposed all day to the heats, the rains, and the frosts of heaven—shuffling his ungainly trunk along in an elaborate and painful motion—he was enabled to retire at night to enjoy himself at a club of his fellow cripples over a dish of hot meat and vegetables, as the charge was gravely brought against him by a clergyman deposing before a House of Commons' Committee—was *this*, or was his truly paternal consideration, which (if a fact) deserved a statue rather than a whipping-post, and is inconsistent at least with the exaggeration of nocturnal orgies which he has been slandered with—a reason that he should be deprived of his chosen, harmless, nay edifying, way of life, and be committed in hoary age for a sturdy vagabond ?—

There was a Yorick once, [1]whom it would not have shamed to have sate down at the cripples' feast, and to have thrown in his benediction, ay, and his mite too, for a companionable symbol. 'Age, thou hast lost thy breed.'

Half of these stories about the prodigious fortunes made by begging are (I verily believe) misers' calumnies. One was much talked of in the public papers some time since, and the usual charitable inferences deduced. A clerk in the Bank was surprised with the announcement of a five hundred pound legacy left him by a person whose name he was a stranger to. It seems that in his daily morning walks from Peckham (or some village thereabouts) where he lived, to his office, it had been his practice for the last twenty years to drop his halfpenny duly into the hat of some blind Bartimeus, that sate begging alms by the wayside in the Borough. The good old beggar recognised his daily benefactor by the voice only; and, when he died, left all the amassings of his alms (that had been half a

[1] whom it would not have shamed] that would not have shamed him 1822.

century perhaps in the accumulating) to his old Bank friend. Was this a story to purse up people's hearts, and pennies, against giving an alms to the blind ?—or not rather a beautiful moral of well-directed charity on the one part, and noble gratitude upon the other ?

I sometimes wish I had been that Bank clerk.

I seem to remember a poor old grateful kind of creature, blinking, and looking up with his no eyes in the sun—

Is it possible I could have steeled my purse against him ?

Perhaps I had no small change.

Reader, do not be frightened at the hard words, imposition, imposture—*give, and ask no questions.* Cast thy bread upon the waters. Some have unawares (like this Bank clerk) entertained angels.

Shut not thy purse-strings always against painted distress. Act a charity sometimes. When a poor creature (outwardly and visibly such) comes before thee, do not stay to inquire whether the 'seven small children', in whose name he implores thy assistance, have a veritable existence. Rake not into the bowels of unwelcome truth, to save a halfpenny. It is good to believe him. If he be not all that he pretendeth, *give*, and under a personate father of a family, think (if thou pleasest) that thou hast relieved an indigent bachelor. When they come with their counterfeit looks, and mumping tones, think them players. You pay your money to see a comedian feign these things, which, concerning these poor people, thou canst not certainly tell whether they are feigned or not.[1]

A DISSERTATION UPON ROAST PIG

[Printed in *The London Magazine,* vol. vi, no. xxxiii, p. 245 (Sept., 1822). Collected in *Elia,* 1823. Text of 1823.]

MANKIND, says a Chinese manuscript, which my friend M. was obliging enough to read and explain to me, for the first seventy thousand ages ate their meat raw, clawing or biting it from the living animal, just as they do in Abyssinia

[1] *For three paragraphs, &c., in the* L. M., *here omitted, see Editor's Notes.*

to this day. This period is not obscurely hinted at by their great Confucius in the second chapter of his Mundane Mutations, where he designates a kind of golden age by the term Cho-fang, literally the Cooks' holiday. The manuscript goes on to say, that the art of roasting, or rather broiling (which I take to be the elder brother) was accidentally discovered in the manner following. The swine-herd, Ho-ti, having gone out into the woods one morning, as his manner was, to collect mast for his hogs, left his cottage in the care of his eldest son Bo-bo, a great lubberly boy, who being fond of playing with fire, as younkers of his age commonly are, let some sparks escape into a bundle of straw, which kindling quickly, spread the conflagration over every part of their poor mansion till it was reduced to ashes. Together with the cottage (a sorry antediluvian make-shift of a building, you may think it), what was of much more importance, a fine litter of new-farrowed pigs, no less than nine in number, perished. China pigs have been esteemed a luxury all over the East from the remotest periods that we read of. Bo-bo was in the utmost consternation, as you may think, not so much for the sake of the tenement, which his father and he could easily build up again with a few dry branches, and the labour of an hour or two, at any time, as for the loss of the pigs. While he was thinking what he should say to his father, and wringing his hands over the smoking remnants of one of those untimely sufferers, an odour assailed his nostrils, unlike any scent which he had before experienced. What could it proceed from ?—not from the burnt cottage —he had smelt that smell before—indeed this was by no means the first accident of the kind which had occurred through the negligence of this unlucky young fire-brand. Much less did it resemble that of any known herb, weed, or flower. A premonitory moistening at the same time overflowed his nether lip. He knew not what to think. He next stooped down to feel the pig, if there were any signs of life in it. He burnt his fingers, and to cool them he applied them in his booby fashion to his mouth. Some of the crums of the scorched skin had come away with his fingers, and for the first time in his life (in the world's life indeed, for before him no man had known it) he tasted—

[1]*crackling!* Again he felt and fumbled at the pig. It did not burn him so much now, still he licked his fingers from a sort of habit. The truth at length broke into his slow understanding, that it was the pig that smelt so, and the pig that tasted so delicious; and, surrendering himself up to the new-born pleasure, he fell to tearing up whole handfuls of the scorched skin with the flesh next it, and was cramming it down his throat in his beastly fashion, when his sire entered amid the smoking rafters, armed with retributory cudgel, and finding how affairs stood, began to rain blows upon the young rogue's shoulders, as thick as hail-stones, which Bo-bo heeded not any more than if they had been flies. The tickling pleasure, which he experienced in his lower regions, had rendered him quite callous to any inconveniences he might feel in those remote quarters. His father might lay on, but he could not beat him from his pig, till he had fairly made an end of it, when, becoming a little more sensible of his situation, something like the following dialogue ensued.

'You graceless whelp, what have you got there devouring? Is it not enough that you have burnt me down three houses with your dog's tricks, and be hanged to you, but you must be eating fire, and I know not what—what have you got there, I say?'

'O father, the pig, the pig, do come and taste how nice the burnt pig eats.'

The ears of Ho-ti tingled with horror. He cursed his son, and he cursed himself that ever he should beget a son that should eat burnt pig.

Bo-bo, whose scent was wonderfully sharpened since morning, soon raked out another pig, and fairly rending it asunder, thrust the lesser half by main force into the fists of Ho-ti, still shouting out 'Eat, eat, eat the burnt pig, father, only taste—O Lord',—with such-like barbarous ejaculations, cramming all the while as if he would choke.

Ho-ti trembled in every joint while he grasped the abominable thing, wavering whether he should not put his son to death for an unnatural young monster, when the crackling scorching his fingers, as it had done his son's, and applying

[1] *crackling!* Again] *crackling!* He stood in a position of ideot wonder. Again 1822.

the same remedy to them, he in his turn tasted some of its flavour, which, make what sour mouths he would for a pretence, proved not altogether displeasing to him. In conclusion (for the manuscript here is a little tedious) both father and son fairly sat down to the mess, and never left off till they had despatched all that remained of the litter.

Bo-bo was strictly enjoined not to let the secret escape, for the neighbours would certainly have stoned them for a couple of abominable wretches, who could think of improving upon the good meat which God had sent them. Nevertheless, strange stories got about. It was observed that Ho-ti's cottage was burnt down now more frequently than ever. Nothing but fires from this time forward. Some would break out in broad day, others in the night-time. As often as the sow farrowed, so sure was the house of Ho-ti to be in a blaze; and Ho-ti himself, which was the more remarkable, instead of chastising his son, seemed to grow more indulgent to him than ever. At length they were watched, the terrible mystery discovered, and father and son summoned to take their trial at Pekin, then an inconsiderable assize town. Evidence was given, the obnoxious food itself produced in court, and verdict about to be pronounced, when the foreman of the jury begged that some of the burnt pig, of which the culprits stood accused, might be handed into the box. He handled it, and they all handled it, and burning their fingers, as Bo-bo and his father had done before them, and nature prompting to each of them the same remedy, against the face of all the facts, and the clearest charge which judge had ever given—to the surprise of the whole court, townsfolk, strangers, reporters, and all present—without leaving the box, or any manner of consultation whatever, they brought in a simultaneous verdict of Not Guilty.

The judge, who was a shrewd fellow, winked at the manifest iniquity of the decision: and, when the court was dismissed, went privily, and bought up all the pigs that could be had for love or money. In a few days his Lordship's town house was observed to be on fire. The thing took wing, and now there was nothing to be seen but fires in every direction. Fuel and pigs grew enormously dear

all over the district. The insurance offices one and all shut up shop. People built slighter and slighter every day, until it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world. Thus this custom of firing houses continued, till in process of time, says my manuscript, a sage arose, like our Locke, who made a discovery, that the flesh of swine, or indeed of any other animal, might be cooked (*burnt*, as they called it) without the necessity of consuming a whole house to dress it. Then first began the rude form of a gridiron. Roasting by the string, or spit, came in a century or two later, I forget in whose dynasty. By such slow degrees, concludes the manuscript, do the most useful, and seemingly the most obvious arts, make their way among mankind.——

Without placing too implicit faith in the account above given, it must be agreed, that if a worthy pretext for so dangerous an experiment as setting houses on fire (especially in these days) could be assigned in favour of any culinary object, that pretext and excuse might be found in ROAST PIG.

Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*, I will maintain it to be the most delicate—*princeps obsoniorum.*

I speak not of your grown porkers—things between pig and pork—those hobbydehoys—but a young and tender suckling—under a moon old—guiltless as yet of the sty—with no original speck of the *amor immunditiæ*, the hereditary failing of the first parent, yet manifest—his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble, and a grumble—the mild forerunner, or *præludium*, of a grunt.

He must be roasted. I am not ignorant that our ancestors ate them seethed, or boiled—but what a sacrifice of the exterior tegument!

There is no flavour comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted, *crackling*, as it is well called—the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance—with the adhesive oleaginous—O call it not fat—but an indefinable sweetness growing up to it—the tender blossoming of fat—fat cropped in the bud—taken in the shoot—in the first innocence—the cream and

quintessence of the child-pig's yet pure food——the lean, no lean, but a kind of animal manna—or, rather, fat and lean (if it must be so) so blended and running into each other, that both together make but one ambrosian result, or common substance.

Behold him, while he is doing—it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth, than a scorching heat, that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string! —Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes—radiant jellies—shooting stars—

See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth!—wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swinehood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal —wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation—from these sins he is happily snatched away—

> Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
> Death came with timely care—

his memory is odoriferous—no clown curseth, while his stomach half rejecteth, the rank bacon—no coalheaver bolteth him in reeking sausages—he hath a fair sepulchre in the grateful stomach of the judicious epicure—and for such a tomb might be content to die.

He is the best of Sapors. Pine-apple is great. She is indeed almost too transcendent—a delight, if not sinful, yet so like to sinning, that really a tender-conscienced person would do well to pause—too ravishing for mortal taste, she woundeth and excoriateth the lips that approach her—like lovers' kisses, she biteth—she is a pleasure bordering on pain from the fierceness and insanity of her relish—but she stoppeth at the palate—she meddleth not with the appetite—and the coarsest hunger might barter her consistently for a mutton chop.

Pig—let me speak his praise—is no less provocative of the appetite, than he is satisfactory to the criticalness of the censorious palate. The strong man may batten on him, and the weakling refuseth not his mild juices.

Unlike to mankind's mixed characters, a bundle of virtues and vices, inexplicably intertwisted, and not to be un-

ravelled without hazard, he is—good throughout. No part of him is better or worse than another. He helpeth, as far as his little means extend, all around. He is the least envious of banquets. He is all neighbours' fare.

I am one of those, who freely and ungrudgingly impart a share of the good things of this life which fall to their lot (few as mine are in this kind) to a friend. I protest I take as great an interest in my friend's pleasures, his relishes, and proper satisfactions, as in mine own. 'Presents', I often say, 'endear Absents.' Hares, pheasants, partridges, snipes, barn-door chicken (those 'tame villatic fowl'), capons, plovers, brawn, barrels of oysters, I dispense as freely as I receive them. I love to taste them, as it were, upon the tongue of my friend. But a stop must be put somewhere. One would not, like Lear, 'give every thing.' I make my stand upon pig. Methinks it is an ingratitude to the Giver of all good flavours, to extra-domiciliate, or send out of the house, slightingly, (under pretext of friendship, or I know not what) a blessing so particularly adapted, predestined, I may say, to my individual palate.—It argues an insensibility.

I remember a touch of conscience in this kind at school. My good old aunt, who never parted from me at the end of a holiday without stuffing a sweet-meat, or some nice thing, into my pocket, had dismissed me one evening with a smoking plum-cake, fresh from the oven. In my way to school (it was over London bridge) a grey-headed old beggar saluted me (I have no doubt at this time of day that he was a counterfeit). I had no pence to console him with, and in the vanity of self-denial, and the very coxcombry of charity, school-boy-like, I made him a present of—the whole cake! I walked on a little, buoyed up, as one is on such occasions, with a sweet soothing of self-satisfaction; but before I had got to the end of the bridge, my better feelings returned, and I burst into tears, thinking how ungrateful I had been to my good aunt, to go and give her good gift away to a stranger, that I had never seen before, and who might be a bad man for aught I knew; and then I thought of the pleasure my aunt would be taking in thinking that I—I myself, and not another—would eat her nice cake—and what should I say to her the next

time I saw her—how naughty I was to part with her pretty present—and the odour of that spicy cake came back upon my recollection, and the pleasure and the curiosity I had taken in seeing her make it, and her joy when she sent it to the oven, and how disappointed she would feel that I had never had a bit of it in my mouth at last—and I blamed my impertinent spirit of alms-giving, and out-of-place hypocrisy of goodness, and above all I wished [1]never to see the face again of that insidious, good-for-nothing, old grey impostor.

Our ancestors were nice in their methods of sacrificing these tender victims. We read of pigs whipt to death with something of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards intenerating and dulcifying a substance, naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto—

I remember an hypothesis, argued upon by the young students, when I was at St. Omer's, and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, 'Whether, supposing that the flavour of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (*per flagellationem extremam*) superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?' I forget the decision.

His sauce should be considered. Decidedly, a few bread crums, done up with his liver and brains, and a dash of mild sage. But, banish, dear Mrs. Cook, I beseech you, the whole onion tribe. Barbecue your whole hogs to your palate, steep them in shalots, stuff them out with plantations of the rank and guilty garlic; you cannot poison them, or make them stronger than they are—but consider, he is a weakling—a flower.

[1] never to see the face again] never again to see the face 1822.

A BACHELOR'S COMPLAINT OF THE BEHAVIOUR OF MARRIED PEOPLE

[Printed in *The Reflector*, vol. ii, no. iv, art. xiii, p. 349 (Oct.–Dec. 1811); *The London Magazine*, vol. vi, no. xxxiii, p. 261 (Sept., 1822). Collected in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

[1]As a single man, I have spent a good deal of my time in noting down the infirmities of Married People, to console myself for those superior pleasures, which they tell me I have lost by remaining as I am.

I cannot say that the quarrels of men and their wives ever made any great impression upon me, or had much tendency to strengthen me in those anti-social resolutions, which I took up long ago upon more substantial considerations. What oftenest offends me at the houses of married persons where I visit, is an error of quite a different description;—it is that they are too loving.

Not too loving neither: that does not explain my meaning. Besides, why should that offend me? The very act of separating themselves from the rest of the world, to have the fuller enjoyment of each other's society, implies that they prefer one another to all the world.

But what I complain of is, that they carry this preference so undisguisedly, they perk it up in the faces of us single people so shamelessly, you cannot be in their company a moment without being made to feel, by some indirect hint or open avowal, that *you* are not the object of this preference. Now there are some things which give no offence, while implied or taken for granted merely; but expressed, there is much offence in them. If a man were to accost the first homely-featured or plain-dressed young woman of his acquaintance, and tell her bluntly, that she was not handsome or rich enough for him, and he could not marry her, he would deserve to be kicked for his ill manners; yet no less is implied in the fact, that having access and opportunity of putting the question to her, he has never yet thought fit to do it. The young woman understands this as clearly as if it were put into words;

[1] As a . . . have spent] Mr. Reflector,—I am a single man not quite turned of forty, who have spent 1811.

but no reasonable young woman would think of making this the ground of a quarrel. Just as little right have a married couple to tell me by speeches, and looks that are scarce less plain than speeches, that I am not the happy man, —the lady's choice. It is enough that I know I am not: I do not want this perpetual reminding.

The display of superior knowledge or riches may be made sufficiently mortifying; but these admit of a palliative. The knowledge which is brought out to insult me, may accidentally improve me; and in the rich man's houses and pictures,—his parks and gardens, I have a temporary usufruct at least. But the display of married happiness has none of these palliatives: it is throughout pure, unrecompensed, unqualified insult.

Marriage by its best title is a monopoly, and not of the least invidious sort. It is the cunning of most possessors of any exclusive [1]privilege to keep their advantage as much out of sight as possible, that their less favoured neighbours, seeing little of the benefit, may the less be disposed to question the right. But these married monopolists thrust the most obnoxious part of their patent into our faces.

Nothing is to me more distasteful than that entire complacency and satisfaction which beam in the countenances of a new-married couple,—in that of the lady particularly: it tells you, that her lot is disposed of in this world: that *you* can have no hopes of her. It is true, I have none; nor wishes either, perhaps: but this is one of those truths which ought, as I said before, to be taken for granted, not expressed.

The excessive airs which those people give themselves, founded on the ignorance of us unmarried people, would be more offensive if they were less irrational. We will allow them to understand the mysteries belonging to their own craft better than we who have not had the happiness to be made free of the company: but their arrogance is not content within these limits. If a single person presume to offer his opinion in their presence, though upon the most indifferent subject, he is immediately silenced as an incompetent person. Nay, a young married lady of my acquain-

[1] privilege] privileges 1811, 1822.

tance, who, the best of the jest was, had not changed her condition above a fortnight before, in a question on which I had the misfortune to differ from her, respecting the properest mode of breeding oysters for the London market, had the assurance to ask with a sneer, how such an old Bachelor as I could pretend to know any thing about such matters.

But what I have spoken of hitherto is nothing to the airs which these creatures give themselves when they come, as they generally do, to have children. When I consider how little of a rarity children are,—that every street and blind alley swarms with them,—that the poorest people commonly have them in most abundance,—that there are few marriages that are not blest with at least one of these bargains,—how often they turn out ill, and defeat the fond hopes of their parents, taking to vicious courses, which end in poverty, disgrace, the gallows, &c.—I cannot for my life tell what cause for pride there can possibly be in having them. If they were young phœnixes, indeed, that were born but one in a year, there might be a pretext. But when they are so common——

I do not advert to the insolent merit which they assume with their husbands on these occasions. Let them look to that. But why *we*, who are not their natural-born subjects, should be expected to bring out spices, myrrh, and incense, —our tribute and homage of admiration,—I do not see.

'Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, even so are the young children:' so says the excellent office in our Prayer-book appointed for the churching of women. 'Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them:' So say I; but then don't let him discharge his quiver upon us that are weaponless;—let them be arrows, but not to gall and stick us. I have generally observed that these arrows are double-headed: they have two forks, to be sure to hit with one or the other. As for instance, when you come into a house which is full of children, if you happen to take no notice of them (you are thinking of something else, perhaps, and turn a deaf ear to their innocent caresses), you are set down as untractable, morose, a hater of children. On the other hand, if you find them more than usually engaging,—if you are taken with their pretty manners, and

set about in earnest to romp and play with them, some pretext or other is sure to [1]be found for sending them out of the room : they are too noisy or boisterous, or Mr. —— does not like children. With one or other of these forks the arrow is sure to hit you.

I could forgive their jealousy, and dispense with toying with their brats, if it gives them any pain ; but I think it unreasonable to be called upon to *love* them, where I see no occasion,—to love a whole family, perhaps, eight, nine, or ten, indiscriminately,—to love all the pretty dears because children are so engaging.

I know there is a proverb, ' Love me, love my dog : ' that is not always so very practicable, particularly if the dog be set upon you to tease you or snap at you in sport. But a dog, or a lesser thing,—any inanimate substance, as a keep-sake, a watch or a ring, a tree, or the place where we last parted when my friend went away upon a long absence, I can make shift to love, because I love him, and any thing that reminds me of him ; provided it be in its nature indifferent, and apt to receive whatever hue fancy can give it. But children have a real character and an essential being of themselves : they are amiable or unamiable *per se ;* I must love or hate them as I see cause for either in their qualities. A child's nature is too serious a thing to admit of its being regarded as a mere appendage to another being, and to be loved or hated accordingly : they stand with me upon their own stock, as much as men and women do. O ! but you will say, sure it is an attractive age,—there is something in the tender years of infancy that of itself charms us. That is the very reason why I am more nice about them. I know that a sweet child is the sweetest thing in nature, not even excepting the delicate [2]creatures which bear them ; but the prettier the kind of a thing is, the more desirable it is that it should be pretty of its kind. One daisy differs not much from another in glory ; but a violet should look and smell the daintiest.— I was always rather squeamish in my women and children.

But this is not the worst : one must be admitted into their familiarity at least, before they can complain of inattention. It implies visits, and some kind of intercourse.

[1] be found] be quickly found 1811, 1822. [2] creatures] things 1811.

But if the husband be a man with whom you have lived on a friendly footing before marriage,—if you did not come in on the wife's side,—if you did not sneak into the house in her train, but were an old friend in first habits of intimacy before their courtship was so much as thought on,—look about you—your tenure is precarious—before a twelvemonth shall roll over your head, you shall find your old friend gradually grow cool and altered towards you, and at last seek opportunities of breaking with you. I have scarce a married friend of my acquaintance, upon whose firm faith I can rely, whose friendship did not commence *after the period of his marriage.* With some limitations they can endure that: but that the good man should have dared to enter into a solemn league of friendship in which they were not consulted, though it happened before they knew him,—before they that are now man and wife ever met,—this is intolerable to them. Every long friendship, every old authentic intimacy, must be brought into their office to be new stamped with their currency, as a sovereign Prince calls in the good old money that was coined in some [1]reign before he was born or thought of, to be new marked and minted with the stamp of his authority, before he will let it pass current in the world. You may guess what luck generally befalls such a rusty piece of metal as I am in these *new mintings.*

Innumerable are the ways which they take to insult and worm you out of their husband's confidence. Laughing at all you say with a kind of wonder, as if you were a queer kind of fellow that said good things, *but an oddity*, is one of the ways;—they have a particular kind of stare for the purpose;—till at last the husband, who used to defer to your judgment, and would pass over some excrescences of understanding and manner for the sake of a general vein of observation (not quite vulgar) which he perceived in you, begins to suspect whether you are not altogether a humorist,—a fellow well enough to have consorted with in his bachelor days, but not quite so proper to be introduced to ladies. This may be called the staring way; and is that which has oftenest been put in practice against me.

Then there is the exaggerating way, or the way of irony:

[1] reign] interregnum 1811, 1822.

that is, where they find you an object of especial regard with their husband, who is not so easily to be shaken from the lasting attachment founded on esteem which he has conceived towards you; by never-qualified exaggeration to cry up all that you say or do, till the good man, who understands well enough that it is all done in compliment to him, grows weary of the debt of gratitude which is due to so much candour, and by relaxing a little on his part, and taking down a peg or two in his enthusiasm, sinks at length to that kindly level of moderate esteem,—that 'decent affection and complacent kindness' towards you; where she herself can join in sympathy with him without much stretch and violence to her sincerity.

Another way (for the ways they have to accomplish so desirable a purpose are infinite) is, with a kind of innocent simplicity, continually to mistake what it was which first made their husband fond of you. If an esteem for something excellent in your moral character was that which riveted the chain which she is to break, upon any imaginary discovery of a want of poignancy in your conversation, she will cry, 'I thought, my dear, you described your friend, Mr. ——, as a great wit.' If, on the other hand it was for some supposed charm in your conversation that he first grew to like you, and was content for this to overlook some trifling irregularities in your moral deportment, upon the first notice of any of these she as readily exclaims, 'This, my dear, is your good Mr. ——.' One good lady whom I took the liberty of expostulating with for not showing me quite so much respect as I thought due to her husband's old friend, had the candour to confess to me that she had often heard Mr. —— speak of me before marriage, and that she had conceived a great desire to be acquainted with me, but that the sight of me had very much disappointed her expectations; for from her husband's representations of me, she had formed a notion that she was to see a fine, tall, officer-like looking man (I use her very words); the very reverse of which proved to be the truth. This was candid; and I had the civility not to ask her in return, how she came to pitch upon a standard of personal accomplishments for her husband's friends which differed so much from his own; for my friend's dimensions as near

as possible [1]approximate to mine; he standing five feet five in his shoes, in which I have the advantage of him by about half an inch; and he no more than myself exhibiting any indications of a martial character in his air or countenance.

These are some of the mortifications which I have encountered in the absurd attempt to visit at their houses. To enumerate them all would be a vain endeavour: I shall therefore just glance at the very common impropriety of which married ladies are guilty,—of treating us as if we were their husbands, and *vice versâ*. I mean, when they use us with familiarity, and their husbands with ceremony. *Testacea*, for instance, kept me the other night two or three hours beyond my usual time of supping, while she was fretting because Mr. —— did not come home, till the [2]oysters were all spoiled, rather than she would be guilty of the impoliteness of touching one in his absence. This was reversing the point of good manners: for ceremony is an invention to take off the uneasy feeling which we derive from knowing ourselves to be less the object of love and esteem with a fellow-creature than some other person is. It endeavours to make up, by superior attentions in little points, for that invidious preference which it is forced to deny in the greater. Had *Testacea* kept the oysters back for me, and withstood her husband's importunities to go to supper, she would have acted according to the strict rules of propriety. I know no ceremony that ladies are bound to observe to their husbands, beyond the point of a modest behaviour and decorum: therefore I must protest against the vicarious gluttony of *Cerasia*, who at her own table sent away a dish of [a]Morellas, which I was applying to with great good will, to her husband at the other end of the table, and recommended a plate of less extraordinary gooseberries to my unwedded palate in their stead. Neither can I excuse the wanton affront of——.

But I am weary of stringing up all my married acquain-

[a] I don't know how to spell this word; I mean Morella cherries [1811 *only*].

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[1] approximate] approximated 1811, 1822. [2] oysters were] oysters which she had opened out of compliment to me were 1811, 1822.

tance by Roman denominations. Let them amend and change their manners, or I promise [1]to record the full-length English of their names, to the terror of all such desperate offenders in [2]future.

ON SOME OF THE OLD ACTORS

[This and the two following essays (*On the Artificial Comedy of the last Century*, and *On the Acting of Munden*) were recast, with additions and omissions, for publication in *Elia*, 1823, from three articles printed in *The London Magazine*, viz., *On Some of the Old Actors*, vol. v, no. xxvi, p. 174 (Feb., 1822); *The Old Actors*, vol. v, no. xxviii, p. 305 (April, 1822); and *The Old Actors.—Mr. Suett; Mr. Munden*, vol. vi, no. xxxiv, p. 349 (Oct., 1822); this last being a reprint from *The Examiner*, Nov. 7, 8 1819. Text of 1823.]

[3]THE casual sight of an old Play Bill, which I picked up the other day—I know not by what chance it was preserved so long—tempts me to call to mind a few of the Players, who make the principal figure in it. It presents the cast of parts in the Twelfth Night, at the old Drury-lane Theatre two-and-thirty years ago. There is something very touching in these old remembrances. They make us think how we *once* used to read a Play Bill—not, as now peradventure, singling out a favorite performer, and casting a negligent eye over the rest; but spelling out every name, down to the very mutes and servants of the scene;—when it was a matter of no small moment to us whether Whitfield, or Packer, took the part of Fabian; when Benson, and Burton, and Phillimore—names of small account—had an importance, beyond what we can be content to attribute now to the time's best actors.—'Orsino, by Mr. Barrymore.'—What a full Shakspearian sound it carries! how fresh to memory arise the image, and the manner, of the gentle actor!

Those who have only seen Mrs. Jordan within the last ten or fifteen years, can have no adequate notion of her performance of such parts as Ophelia; Helena, in All's

[1] to record . . . to the terror] to send you the full-length English of their names, to be recorded to the terror 1811, 1822. [2] future.] future. | Your humble servant, | INNUPTUS. | P.S. I hope you are not a married man. 1811; future. | Your humble servant, | ELIA. 1822.
[3] *This and the three following paragraphs were added in* 1823.

Well that Ends Well; and Viola in this play. Her voice had latterly acquired a coarseness, which suited well enough with her Nells and Hoydens, but in those days it sank, with her steady melting eye, into the heart. Her joyous parts—in which her memory now chiefly lives—in her youth were outdone by her plaintive ones. There is no giving an account how she delivered the disguised story of her love for Orsino. It was no set speech, that she had foreseen, so as to weave it into an harmonious period, line necessarily following line, to make up the music—yet I have heard it so spoken, or rather *read*, not without its grace and beauty—but, when she had declared her sister's history to be a 'blank', and that she 'never told her love', there was a pause, as if the story had ended—and then the image of the 'worm in the bud' came up as a new suggestion—and the heightened image of 'Patience' still followed after that, as by some growing (and not mechanical) process, thought springing up after thought, I would almost say, as they were watered by her tears. So in those fine lines—

> Write loyal cantos of contemned love—
> Hollow your name to the reverberate hills—

there was no preparation made in the foregoing image for that which was to follow. She used no rhetoric in her passion; or it was nature's own rhetoric, most legitimate then, when it seemed altogether without rule or law.

Mrs. Powel (now Mrs. Renard), then in the pride of her beauty, made an admirable Olivia. She was particularly excellent in her unbending scenes in conversation with the Clown. I have seen some Olivias—and those very sensible actresses too—who in these interlocutions have seemed to set their wits at the jester, and to vie conceits with him in downright emulation. But she used him for her sport, like what he was, to trifle a leisure sentence or two with, and then to be dismissed, and she to be the Great Lady still. She touched the imperious fantastic humour of the character with nicety. Her fine spacious person filled the scene.

The part of Malvolio has in my judgment been so often misunderstood, and the *general merits* of the actor, who then played it, so unduly appreciated, that I shall hope for pardon, if I am a little prolix upon these points.

[1]Of all the actors who flourished in my time—a melancholy phrase if taken aright, reader—Bensley had most of the swell of soul, was greatest in the delivery of heroic conceptions, the emotions consequent upon the presentment of a great idea to the fancy. He had the true poetical enthusiasm—the rarest faculty among players. None that I remember possessed even a portion of that fine madness which he threw out in Hotspur's famous rant about glory, or the transports of the Venetian incendiary at the vision of the fired [a]city. His voice had the dissonance, and at times the inspiriting effect of the trumpet. His gait was uncouth and stiff, but no way embarrassed by affectation; and the thorough-bred gentleman was uppermost in every movement. He seized the moment of passion with the greatest truth; like a faithful clock, never striking before the time; never anticipating or leading you to anticipate. He was totally destitute of trick and artifice. He seemed come upon the stage to do the poet's message simply, and he did it with as genuine fidelity as the nuncios in Homer deliver the errands of the gods. He let the passion or the sentiment do its own work without prop or bolstering. He would have scorned to mountebank it; and betrayed none of that *cleverness* which is the bane of serious acting. For this reason, his Iago was the only endurable one which I remember to have seen. No spectator from his action could divine more of his artifice than Othello was supposed to do. His confessions in soliloquy alone put you in possession of the mystery. There were no by-intimations to make the audience fancy their own discernment so much greater than that of the Moor—who commonly stands like a great helpless mark set up for mine Ancient, and a quantity of barren spectators, to shoot their bolts at. The Iago of Bensley did not go to work so grossly. There was a triumphant tone about the character, natural to a general consciousness of power; but none of that petty vanity

[a] How lovelily the Adriatic whore
Dress'd in her flames will shine—devouring flames—
Such as will burn her to her wat'ry bottom,
And hiss in her foundation.
Pierre, in Venice Preserved [1822 *only*].

[1] *Here begins the essay* On Some of the Old Actors, L. M., *Feb.*, 1822.

which chuckles and cannot contain itself upon any little successful stroke of its knavery—[1]as is common with your small villains, and green probationers in mischief. It did not clap or crow before its time. It was not a man setting his wits at a child, and winking all the while at other children who are mightily pleased at being let into the secret; but a consummate villain entrapping a noble nature into toils, against which no discernment was available, where the manner was as fathomless as the purpose seemed dark, and without motive. The part of Malvolio, in the Twelfth Night, was performed by Bensley, with a richness and a dignity, of which (to judge from some recent castings of that character) the very tradition must be worn out from the stage. No manager in those days would have dreamed of giving it to Mr. Baddeley, or Mr. Parsons: when Bensley was occasionally absent from the theatre, John Kemble thought it no derogation to succeed to the part. Malvolio is not essentially ludicrous. He becomes comic but by accident. He is cold, austere, repelling; but dignified, consistent, and, for what appears, rather of an over-stretched morality. Maria describes him as a sort of Puritan; and he might have worn his gold chain with honour in one of our old round-head families, in the service of a Lambert, or a Lady Fairfax. But his morality and his manners are misplaced in Illyria. He is opposed to the proper *levities* of the piece, and falls in the unequal contest. Still his pride, or his gravity, (call it which you will) is inherent, and native to the man, not mock or affected, which latter only are the fit objects to excite laughter. His quality is at the best unlovely, but neither buffoon nor contemptible. His bearing is lofty, a little above his station, but probably not much above his deserts. We see no reason why he should not have been brave, honourable, accomplished. His careless committal of the ring to the ground (which he was commissioned to restore to Cesario), bespeaks a generosity of birth and [a]feeling. His dialect on all occasions is that

[a] *Viola.* She took the ring from me; I'll none of it.
Mal. Come, Sir, you peevishly threw it to her; and her will is, it should be so returned. If it be worth stooping for, there it lies in your eye; if not, be it his that finds it.

[1] as] which 1822.

of a gentleman, and a man of education. We must not confound him with the eternal [1]old, low steward of comedy. He is master of the household to a great Princess ; a dignity probably conferred upon him for other respects than age or length of [a]service. Olivia, at the first indication of his supposed madness, declares that she ' would not have him miscarry for half of her dowry '. Does this look as if the character was meant to appear little or insignificant ? Once, indeed, she accuses him to his face—of what ?—of being ' sick of self-love ',—but with a gentleness and considerateness which could not have been, if she had not thought that this particular infirmity shaded some virtues. His rebuke to the knight, and his sottish revellers, is sensible and spirited ; and when we take into consideration the unprotected condition of his mistress, and the strict regard with which her state of real or dissembled mourning would draw the eyes of the world upon her house-affairs, Malvolio might feel the honour of the family in some sort in his keeping ; as it appears not that Olivia had any more brothers, or kinsmen, to look to it—for Sir Toby had dropped all such nice respects at the buttery hatch. That Malvolio was meant to be represented as possessing [2]estimable qualities, the expression of the Duke in his anxiety to have him reconciled, almost infers. ' Pursue him, and entreat him to a peace.' Even in his abused state of chains and darkness, a sort of greatness seems never to desert him. He argues highly and well with the supposed Sir Topas, and philosophises gallantly upon his straw.[b] There must have

[a] Mrs. Inchbald seems to have fallen into the common mistake of the character in some sensible observations, otherwise, upon this Comedy. ' It might be asked ', she says, ' whether this credulous steward was much deceived in imputing a degraded taste, in the sentiments of love, to his fair lady Olivia, as she actually did fall in love with a domestic ; and one, who from his extreme youth, was perhaps a greater reproach to her discretion, than had she cast a tender regard upon her old and faithful servant.' But where does she gather the fact of his age ? Neither Maria nor Fabian ever cast that reproach upon him.

[b] *Clown.* What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?
Mal. That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.
Clown. What thinkest thou of his opinion?
Mal. I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve of his opinion.

[1] old, *omit* 1822.

[2] estimable] some estimable 1822.

been some shadow of worth about the man ; he must have been something more than a mere vapour—a thing of straw, or Jack in office—before Fabian and Maria could have ventured sending him upon a courting-errand to Olivia. There was some consonancy (as he would say) in the undertaking, or the jest would have been too bold even for that house of misrule.[1]

Bensley, [2]accordingly, threw over the part an air of Spanish loftiness. He looked, spake, and moved like an old Castilian. He was starch, spruce, opinionated, but his superstructure of pride seemed bottomed upon a sense of worth. There was something in it beyond the coxcomb. It was big and swelling, but you could not be sure that it was hollow. You might wish to see it taken down, but you felt that it was upon an elevation. He was magnificent from the outset ; but when the decent sobrieties of the character began to give way, and the poison of self-love, in his conceit of the Countess's affection, gradually to work, you would have thought that the hero of La Mancha in person stood before you. How he went smiling to himself ! with what ineffable carelessness would he twirl his gold chain ! what a dream it was ! you were infected with the illusion, and did not wish that it should be removed ! you had no room for laughter ! if an unseasonable reflection of morality obtruded itself, it was a deep sense of the pitiable infirmity of man's nature, that can lay him open to such frenzies—but in truth you rather admired than pitied the lunacy while it lasted—you felt that an hour of such mistake was worth an age with the eyes open. Who would not wish to live but for a day in the conceit of such a lady's love as Olivia ? Why, the Duke would have given his principality but for a quarter of a minute, sleeping or waking, to have been so deluded. The man seemed to tread upon air, to taste manna, to walk with his head in the clouds, to mate Hyperion. O ! shake not the castles of his pride—endure yet for a season, bright moments of confidence—' stand still ye watches of the element,' that Malvolio may be still in fancy fair Olivia's lord—but fate and retribution say no—I hear the mischievous titter of

[1] *For a long passage in the* L. M. *here omitted, see Editor's Notes.*
[2] accordingly, *omit* 1822.

Maria—the witty taunts of Sir Toby—the still more insupportable triumph of the foolish knight—the counterfeit Sir Topas is unmasked—and 'thus the whirligig of time', as the true clown hath it, 'brings in his revenges.' I confess that I never saw the catastrophe of this character, while Bensley played it, without a kind of tragic interest. There was good foolery too. Few now remember Dodd. What an Aguecheek the stage lost in him! Lovegrove, who came nearest to the old actors, revived the character some few seasons ago, and made it sufficiently grotesque; but Dodd was *it*, as it came out of nature's hands. It might be said to remain *in puris naturalibus*. In expressing slowness of apprehension this actor surpassed all others. You could see the first dawn of an idea stealing slowly over his countenance, climbing up by little and little, with a painful process, till it cleared up at last to the fulness of a twilight conception—its highest meridian. He seemed to keep back his intellect, as some have had the power to retard their pulsation. The balloon takes less time in filling, than it took to cover the expansion of his broad moony face over all its quarters with expression. A glimmer of understanding would appear in a corner of his eye, and for lack of fuel go out again. A part of his forehead would catch a little intelligence, and be a long time in communicating it to the remainder.

I am ill at dates, but I think it is now better than five and twenty years ago that walking in the gardens of Gray's Inn—they were then far finer than they are now—the accursed Verulam Buildings had not encroached upon all the east side of them, cutting out delicate green crankles, and shouldering away one of two of the stately alcoves of the terrace—the survivor stands gaping and relationless as if it remembered its brother—they are still the best gardens of any of the Inns of Court, my beloved Temple not forgotten—have the gravest character, their aspect being altogether reverend and law-breathing—Bacon has left the impress of his foot upon these gravel walks——taking my afternoon solace on a summer day upon the aforesaid terrace, a comely sad personage came towards me, whom, from his grave air and deportment, I judged to be one of the old Benchers of the Inn. He had a serious thoughtful

forehead, and seemed to be in meditations of mortality. As I have an instinctive awe of old Benchers, I was passing him with that sort of subindicative token of respect which one is apt to demonstrate towards a venerable stranger, and which rather denotes an inclination to greet him, than any positive motion of the body to that effect—a species of humility and will-worship which I observe, nine times out of ten, rather puzzles than pleases the person it is offered to—when the face turning full upon me strangely identified itself with that of Dodd. Upon close inspection I was not mistaken. But could this sad thoughtful countenance be the same vacant face of folly which I had hailed so often under circumstances of gaiety ; which I had never seen without a smile, or recognised but as the usher of mirth ; that looked out so formally flat in Foppington, so frothily pert in Tattle, so impotently busy in Backbite ; so blankly divested of all meaning, or resolutely expressive of none, in Acres, in Fribble, and a thousand agreeable impertinences ? Was this the face—full of thought and carefulness—that had so often divested itself at will of every trace of either to give me diversion, to clear my cloudy face for two or three hours at least of its furrows ? Was this the face—manly, sober, intelligent,—which I had so often despised, made mocks at, made merry with ? The remembrance of the freedoms which I had taken with it came upon me with a reproach of insult. I could have asked it pardon. I thought it looked upon me with a sense of injury. There is something strange as well as sad in seeing actors—your pleasant fellows particularly—subjected to and suffering the common lot—their fortunes, their casualties, their deaths, seem to belong to the scene, their actions to be amenable to poetic justice only. We can hardly connect them with more awful responsibilities. The death of this fine actor took place shortly after this meeting. He had quitted the stage some months ; and, as I learned afterwards, had been in the habit of resorting daily to these gardens almost to the day of his decease. In these serious walks probably he was divesting himself of many scenic and some real vanities—weaning himself from the frivolities of the lesser and the greater theatre—doing gentle penance for a life of no very reprehensible fooleries,—taking off by

degrees the buffoon mask which he might feel he had worn too long—and rehearsing for a more solemn cast of part. Dying he ' put on the weeds of [1]Dominic '.[a]

If few can remember Dodd, many yet living will not easily forget the pleasant creature, who in those days enacted the part of the Clown to Dodd's Sir Andrew.—[2]Richard, or rather Dicky Suett—for so in his life-time he delighted to be called, and time hath ratified the appellation—lieth buried on the north side of the cemetery of Holy Paul, to whose service his nonage and tender years were dedicated. There are who do yet remember him at that period—his pipe clear and harmonious. He would often speak of his chorister days, when he was ' cherub Dicky '.

What clipped his wings, or made it expedient that he should exchange the holy for the profane state ; whether he had lost his good voice (his best recommendation to that office), like Sir John, ' with hallooing and singing of anthems ; ' or whether he was adjudged to lack something, even in those early years, of the gravity indispensable to an occupation which professeth to ' commerce with the skies '—I could never rightly learn ; but we find him, after the probation of a twelvemonth or so, reverting to a secular condition, and become one of us.

I think he was not altogether of that timber, out of which cathedral seats and sounding boards are hewed. But if a glad heart—kind and therefore glad—be any part of sanctity, then might the robe of Motley, with which he invested himself with so much humility after his deprivation, and which he wore so long with so much blameless

[a] Dodd was a man of reading, and left at his death a choice collection of old English literature. I should judge him to have been a man of wit. I know one instance of an impromptu which no length of study could have bettered. My merry friend, Jem White, had seen him one evening in Aguecheek, and recognising Dodd the next day in Fleet Street, was irresistibly impelled to take off his hat and salute him as the identical Knight of the preceding evening with a ' Save you, *Sir Andrew* '. Dodd, not at all disconcerted at this unusual address from a stranger, with a courteous half-rebuking wave of the hand, put him off with an ' Away, *Fool* '.

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[1] *Here the text ceases to follow that of Feb.*, 1822. [2] *Here the text begins to follow that of Oct.*, 1822. *See Editor's Notes.*

satisfaction to himself and to the public, be accepted for a surplice—his white stole, and *albe*.

The first fruits of his secularization was an engagement upon the boards of Old Drury, at which theatre he commenced, as I have been told, with adopting the manner of Parsons in old men's characters. At the period in which most of us knew him, he was no more an imitator than he was in any true sense himself imitable.

He was the Robin Good-Fellow of the stage. He came in to trouble all things with a welcome perplexity, himself no whit troubled for the matter. He was known, like Puck, by his note—*Ha! Ha! Ha!*—sometimes deepening to *Ho! Ho! Ho!* with an irresistible accession, derived perhaps remotely from his ecclesiastical education, foreign to his prototype of,—*O La!* Thousands of hearts yet respond to the chuckling *O La!* of Dicky Suett, brought back to their remembrance by the faithful transcript of his friend Mathews's mimicry. The 'force of nature could no further go'. He drolled upon the stock of these two syllables richer than the cuckoo.

Care, that troubles all the world, was forgotten in his composition. Had he had but two grains (nay, half a grain) of it, he could never have supported himself upon those two spider's strings, which served him (in the latter part of his unmixed existence) as legs. A doubt or a scruple must have made him totter, a sigh have puffed him down; the weight of a frown had staggered him, a wrinkle made him lose his balance. But on he went, scrambling upon those airy stilts of his, with Robin Good-Fellow, 'thorough brake, thorough briar,' reckless of a scratched face or a torn doublet.

Shakspeare foresaw him, when he framed his fools and jesters. They have all the true Suett stamp, a loose and shambling gait, a slippery tongue, this last the ready midwife to a without-pain-delivered jest; in words, light as air, venting truths deep as the centre; with idlest rhymes tagging conceit when busiest, singing with Lear in the tempest, or Sir Toby at the buttery hatch.

Jack Bannister and he had the fortune to be more of personal favourites with the town than any actors before or after. The difference, I take it, was this:—Jack was

more *beloved* for his sweet, good-natured, moral pretensions. Dicky was more *liked* for his sweet, good-natured, no pretensions at all. Your whole conscience stirred with Bannister's performance of Walter in the Children in the [1]Wood—but Dicky seemed like a thing, as Shakspeare says of Love, too young to know what conscience is. He puts us into Vesta's days. Evil fled before him—not as from Jack, as from an antagonist,—but because it could not touch him, any more than a cannon-ball a fly. He was delivered from the burthen of that death; and, when Death came himself, not in metaphor, to fetch Dicky, it is recorded of him by Robert Palmer, who kindly watched his exit, that he received the last stroke, neither varying his accustomed tranquillity, nor tune, with the simple exclamation, worthy to have been recorded in his epitaph—*O La! O La! Bobby!*

[2]The elder Palmer (of stage-treading celebrity) commonly played Sir Toby in those days; but there is a solidity of wit in the jests of that half-Falstaff which he did not quite fill out. He was as much too showy as Moody (who sometimes took the part) was dry and sottish. In sock or buskin there was an air of swaggering gentility about Jack Palmer. He was a *gentleman* with a slight infusion of *the footman*. His brother Bob (of recenter memory) who was his shadow in every thing while he lived, and dwindled into less than a shadow afterwards—was a *gentleman* with a little stronger infusion of the *latter ingredient;* that was all. It is amazing how a little of the more or less makes a difference in these things. When you saw Bobby in the Duke's Servant,[a] you said, what a pity such a pretty fellow was only a servant. When you saw Jack figuring in Captain Absolute, you thought you could trace his promotion to some lady of quality who fancied the handsome fellow in his top-knot, and had bought him a commission. Therefore Jack in Dick Amlet was insuperable.

Jack had two voices,—both plausible, hypocritical, and

[a] High Life Below Stairs.

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[1] Wood—but] Wood—how dearly beautiful it was!—but 1822.
[2] *Here, to the end, the text reverts to that of Feb.*, 1822.

insinuating; but his secondary or supplemental voice still more decisively histrionic than his common one. It was reserved for the spectator; and the dramatis personæ were supposed to know nothing at all about it. The *lies* of young Wilding, and the *sentiments* in Joseph Surface, were thus marked out in a sort of italics to the audience. This secret correspondence with the company before the curtain (which is the bane and death of tragedy) has an extremely happy effect in some kinds of comedy, in the more highly artificial comedy of Congreve or of Sheridan especially, where the absolute sense of reality (so indispensable to scenes of interest) is not required, or would rather interfere to diminish your pleasure. The fact is, you do not believe in such characters as Surface—the villain of artificial comedy—even while you read or see them. If you did, they would shock and not divert you. When Ben, in Love for Love, returns from sea, the following exquisite dialogue occurs at his first meeting with his father—

Sir Sampson. Thou hast been many a weary league, Ben, since I saw thee.

Ben. Ey, ey, been! Been far enough, an that be all.—Well, father, and how do all at home? how does brother Dick, and brother Val?

Sir Sampson. Dick! body o' me. Dick has been dead these two years. I writ you word when you were at Leghorn.

Ben. Mess, that's true; Marry, I had forgot. Dick's dead, as you say—Well, and how?—I have a many questions to ask you—

Here is an instance of insensibility which in real life would be revolting, or rather in real life could not have co-existed with the warm-hearted temperament of the character. But when you read it in the spirit with which such playful selections and specious combinations rather than strict *metaphrases* of nature should be taken, or when you saw Bannister play it, it neither did, nor does wound the moral sense at all. For what is Ben—the pleasant sailor which Bannister gives us—but a piece of satire—a creation of Congreve's fancy—a dreamy combination of all the accidents of a sailor's character—his contempt of money—his credulity to women—with that necessary estrangement from home which it is just within the verge of credibility to suppose *might* produce such an hallucination as is here described. We never think the worse of Ben for it, or feel it as a stain upon his character. But

when an actor comes, and instead of the delightful phantom —the creature dear to half-belief—which Bannister exhibited—displays before our eyes a downright concretion of a Wapping sailor—a jolly warm-hearted Jack Tar—and nothing else—when instead of investing it with a delicious confusedness of the head, and a veering undirected goodness of purpose—he gives to it a downright daylight understanding, and a full consciousness of its actions; thrusting forward the sensibilities of the character with a pretence as if it stood upon nothing else, and was to be judged by them alone—we feel the discord of the thing; the scene is disturbed; a real man has got in among the dramatis personæ, and puts them out. We want the sailor turned out. We feel that his true place is not behind the curtain but in the first or second [1]gallery.

ON THE ARTIFICIAL COMEDY OF THE LAST CENTURY

[Printed under the title *The Old Actors* in *The London Magazine*, vol. v, no. xxviii, p. 305 (April, 1822). Collected, with omissions, in *Elia*, 1823. Text of 1823.]

The artificial Comedy, or Comedy of manners, is quite extinct on our stage. Congreve and Farquhar show their heads once in seven years only, to be exploded and put down instantly. The times cannot bear them. Is it for a few wild speeches, an occasional license of dialogue? I think not altogether. The business of their dramatic characters will not stand the moral test. We screw every thing up to that. Idle gallantry in a fiction, a dream, the passing pageant of an evening, startles us in the same way as the alarming indications of profligacy in a son or ward in real life should startle a parent or guardian. We have no such middle emotions as dramatic interests left. We see a stage libertine playing his loose pranks of two hours' duration, and of no after consequence, with the severe eyes which inspect real vices with their bearings upon two worlds. We are spectators to a plot or intrigue (not reducible in life to the point of strict morality) and

[1] gallery.] gallery. | (*To be resumed occasionally.*) 1822.

take it all for truth. We substitute a real for a dramatic person, and judge him accordingly. We try him in our courts, from which there is no appeal to the *dramatis personæ*, his peers. We have been spoiled with—not sentimental comedy—but a tyrant far more pernicious to our pleasures which has succeeded to it, the exclusive and all devouring drama of common life; where the moral point is every thing; where, instead of the fictitious half-believed personages of the stage (the phantoms of old comedy) we recognise ourselves, our brothers, aunts, kinsfolk, allies, patrons, enemies,—the same as in life,—with an interest in what is going on so hearty and substantial, that we cannot afford our moral judgment, in its deepest and most vital results, to compromise or slumber for a moment. What is *there* transacting, by no modification is made to affect us in any other manner than the same events or characters would do in our relationships of life. We carry our fire-side concerns to the theatre with us. We do not go thither, like our ancestors, to escape from the pressure of reality, so much as to confirm our experience of it; to make assurance double, and take a bond of fate. We must live our toilsome lives twice over, as it was the mournful privilege of Ulysses to descend twice to the shades. All that neutral ground of character, which stood between vice and virtue; or which in fact was indifferent to neither, where neither properly was called in question; that happy breathing-place from the burthen of a perpetual moral questioning—the sanctuary and quiet Alsatia of hunted casuistry—is broken up and disfranchised, as injurious to the interests of society. The privileges of the place are taken away by law. We dare not dally with images, or names, of wrong. We bark like foolish dogs at shadows. We dread infection from the scenic representation of disorder; and fear a painted pustule. In our anxiety that our morality should not take cold, we wrap it up in a great blanket surtout of precaution against the breeze of sunshine.

I confess for myself that (with no great delinquencies to answer for) I am glad for a season to take an airing beyond the diocese of the strict conscience,—not to live always in the precincts of the law-courts,—but now and

then, for a dream-while or so, to imagine a world with no meddling restrictions—to get into recesses, whither the hunter cannot follow me—

> ————————Secret shades
> Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
> While yet there was no fear of Jove—

I come back to my cage and my restraint the fresher and more healthy for it. I wear my shackles more contentedly for having respired the breath of an imaginary freedom. I do not know how it is with others, but I feel the better always for the perusal of one of Congreve's—nay, why should I not add even of Wycherley's—comedies. I am the gayer at least for it; and I could never connect those sports of a witty fancy in any shape with any result to be drawn from them to imitation in real life. They are a world of themselves almost as much as fairy-land. Take one of their characters, male or female (with few exceptions they are alike), and place it in a modern play, and my virtuous indignation shall rise against the profligate wretch as warmly as the Catos of the pit could desire; because in a modern play I am to judge of the right [1]and the wrong. The standard of *police* is the measure of *political justice*. The atmosphere will blight it, it cannot live here. It has got into a moral world, where it has no business, from which it must needs fall headlong; as dizzy, and incapable of [2]making a stand, as a Swedenborgian bad spirit that has wandered unawares into the sphere of one of his Good Men, or Angels. But in its own world do we feel the creature is so very bad?—The Fainalls and the Mirabels, the Dorimants and the Lady Touchwoods, in their own sphere, do not offend my moral [3]sense; in fact they do not appeal to it at all. They seem engaged in their proper element. They break through no laws, or conscientious restraints. They know of none. They have got out of Christendom into the land—what shall I call it?—of cuckoldry—the Utopia of gallantry, where pleasure is duty, and the manners perfect freedom. It is altogether a speculative scene

[1] and the . . . has got] and wrong, and the standard of *police* is the measure of *political justice*. The atmosphere will blight it. It cannot thrive here. It is got 1822. [2] making a] keeping its 1822. [3] sense . . . appeal] sense—or, in fact, appeal 1822.

of things, which has no reference whatever to the world that is. No good person can be justly offended as a spectator, because no good person suffers on the stage. Judged morally, every character in these plays—the few exceptions only are *mistakes*—is alike essentially vain and worthless. The great art of Congreve is especially shown in this, that he has entirely excluded from his scenes,—some little generosities in the part of Angelica perhaps excepted,—not only any thing like a faultless character, but any pretensions to goodness or good feelings whatsoever. Whether he did this designedly, or instinctively, the effect is as happy, as the design (if design) was bold. I used to wonder at the strange power which his Way of the World in particular possesses of interesting you all along in the pursuits of characters, for whom you absolutely care nothing—for you neither hate nor love his personages—and I think it is owing to this very indifference for any, that you endure the whole. He has spread a privation of moral light, I will call it, rather than by the ugly name of palpable darkness, over his creations ; and his shadows flit before you without distinction or preference. Had he introduced a good character, a single gush of moral feeling, a revulsion of the judgment to actual life and actual duties, the impertinent Goshen would have only lighted to the discovery of deformities, which now are none, because we think them none.

Translated into real life, the characters of his, and his friend Wycherley's dramas, are profligates and strumpets,—the business of their brief existence, the undivided pursuit of lawless gallantry. No other spring of action, or possible motive of conduct, is recognised ; principles which, universally acted upon, must reduce this frame of things to a chaos. But we do them wrong in so translating them. No such effects are produced in *their* world. When we are among them, we are amongst a chaotic people. We are not to judge them by our usages. No reverend institutions are insulted by their proceedings,—for they have none among them. No peace of families is violated,—for no family ties exist among them. No purity of the marriage bed is stained,—for none is supposed to have a being. No deep affections are disquieted,—no holy wedlock bands

are snapped asunder,—for affection's depth and wedded faith are not of the growth of that soil. There is neither right nor wrong,—gratitude or its opposite,—claim or duty,—paternity or sonship. Of what consequence is it to virtue, or how is she at all concerned about it, whether Sir Simon, or Dapperwit, steal away Miss Martha; or who is the father of Lord Froth's, or Sir Paul Pliant's children.

The whole is a passing pageant, where we should sit as unconcerned at the issues, for life or death, as at a battle of the frogs and mice. But, like Don Quixote, we take part against the puppets, and quite as impertinently. We dare not contemplate an Atlantis, a scheme, out of which our coxcombical moral sense is for a little transitory ease excluded. We have not the courage to imagine a state of things for which there is neither reward nor punishment. We cling to the painful necessities of shame and blame. We would indict our very dreams.

Amidst the mortifying circumstances attendant upon growing old, it is something to have seen the School for Scandal in its glory. This comedy grew out of Congreve and Wycherley, but gathered some allays of the sentimental comedy which followed theirs. It is impossible that it should be now *acted*, though it continues, at long intervals to be announced in the bills. Its hero, when Palmer played it at least, was Joseph Surface. When I remember the gay boldness, the graceful solemn plausibility, the measured step, the insinuating voice—to express it in a word—the downright *acted* villany of the part, so different from the pressure of conscious actual wickedness,—the hypocritical assumption of hypocrisy,—which made Jack so deservedly a favourite in that character, I must needs conclude the present generation of play-goers more virtuous than myself, or more dense. I freely confess that he divided the palm with me with his better brother; that, in fact, I liked him quite as well. Not but there are passages,—like that, for instance, where Joseph is made to refuse a pittance to a poor relation,—incongruities which Sheridan was forced upon by the attempt to join the artificial with the sentimental comedy, either of which must destroy the other—but over these obstructions Jack's manner floated him so lightly, that a refusal from

him no more shocked you, than the easy compliance of Charles gave you in reality any pleasure; you got over the paltry question as quickly as you could, to get back into the regions of pure comedy, where no cold moral reigns. The highly artificial manner of Palmer in this character counteracted every disagreeable impression which you might have received from the contrast, supposing them real, between the two brothers. You did not believe in Joseph with the same faith with which you believed in Charles. The latter was a pleasant reality, the former a no less pleasant poetical foil to it. The comedy, I have said, is incongruous; a mixture of Congreve with sentimental incompatibilities: the gaiety upon the whole is buoyant; but it required the consummate art of Palmer to reconcile the discordant elements.

A player with Jack's talents, if we had one now, would not dare to do the part in the same manner. He would instinctively avoid every turn which might tend to unrealise, and so to make the character fascinating. He must take his cue from his spectators, who would expect a bad man and a good man as rigidly opposed to each other as the death-beds of those geniuses are contrasted in the prints, which I am sorry to say have disappeared from the windows of my old friend Carrington Bowles, of St. Paul's Church-yard memory—(an exhibition as venerable as the adjacent cathedral, and almost coeval) of the bad and good man at the hour of death; where the ghastly apprehensions of the former,—and truly the grim phantom with his reality of a toasting fork is not to be despised,—so finely contrast with the meek complacent kissing of the rod,—taking it in like honey and butter,—with which the latter submits to the scythe of the gentle bleeder, Time, who wields his lancet with the apprehensive finger of a popular young ladies' surgeon. What flesh, like loving grass, would not covet to meet half-way the stroke of such a delicate mower?—John Palmer was twice an actor in this exquisite part. He was playing to you all the while that he was playing upon Sir Peter and his lady. You had the first intimation of a sentiment before it was on his lips. His altered voice was meant to you, and you were to suppose that his fictitious co-flutterers on the stage

perceived nothing at all of it. What was it to you if that half-reality, the husband, was over-reached by the puppetry —or the thin thing (Lady Teazle's reputation) was persuaded it was dying of a plethory? The fortunes of Othello and Desdemona were not concerned in it. Poor Jack has past from the stage in good time, that he did not live to this our age of seriousness. The pleasant old Teazle *King*, too, is gone in good time. His manner would scarce have past current in our day. We must love or hate—acquit or condemn—censure or pity—exert our detestable coxcombry of moral judgment upon every thing. Joseph Surface, to go down now, must be a downright revolting villain—no compromise—his first appearance must shock and give horror—his specious plausibilities, which the pleasurable faculties of our fathers welcomed with such hearty greetings, knowing that no harm (dramatic harm even) could come, or was meant to come of them, must inspire a cold and killing aversion. Charles (the real canting person of the scene—for the hypocrisy of Joseph has its ulterior legitimate ends, but his brother's professions of a good heart centre in downright self-satisfaction) must be *loved*, and Joseph *hated*. To balance one disagreeable reality with another, Sir Peter Teazle must be no longer the comic idea of a fretful old bachelor bridegroom, whose teasings (while King acted it) were evidently as much played off at you, as they were meant to concern any body on the stage,—he must be a real person, capable in law of sustaining an injury—a person towards whom duties are to be acknowledged—the genuine crim-con antagonist of the villainous seducer Joseph. To realise him more, his sufferings under his unfortunate match must have the downright pungency of life—must (or should) make you not mirthful but uncomfortable, just as the same predicament would move you in a neighbour or old friend. The delicious scenes which give the play its name and zest, must affect you in the same serious manner as if you heard the reputation of a dear female friend attacked in your real presence. Crabtree, and Sir Benjamin—those poor snakes that live but in the sunshine of your mirth—must be ripened by this hot-bed process of realization into asps or amphisbænas; and

Mrs. Candour—O ! frightful ! become a hooded serpent. Oh who that remembers Parsons and Dodd—the wasp and butterfly of the School for Scandal—in those two characters ; and charming natural Miss Pope, the perfect gentlewoman as distinguished from the fine lady of comedy, in this latter part—would forego the true scenic delight—the escape from life—the oblivion of consequences—the holiday barring out of the pedant Reflection—those Saturnalia of two or three brief hours, well won from the world—to sit instead at one of our modern plays—to have his coward conscience (that forsooth must not be left for a moment) stimulated with perpetual appeals—dulled rather, and blunted, as a faculty without repose must be—and his moral vanity pampered with images of notional justice, notional beneficence, lives saved without the spectators' risk, and fortunes given away that cost the author nothing ?

No piece was, perhaps, ever so completely cast in all its parts as this *manager's comedy*. Miss Farren had succeeded to Mrs. Abingdon in Lady Teazle ; and Smith, the original Charles, had retired, when I first saw it. The rest of the characters, with very slight exceptions, remained. I remember it was then the fashion to cry down John Kemble, who took the part of Charles after Smith ; but, I thought, very unjustly. Smith, I fancy, was more airy, and took the eye with a certain gaiety of person. He brought with him no sombre recollections of tragedy. He had not to expiate the fault of having pleased beforehand in lofty declamation. He had no sins of Hamlet or of Richard to atone for. His failure in these parts was a passport to success in one of so opposite a tendency. But, as far as I could judge, the weighty sense of Kemble made up for more personal incapacity than he had to answer for. His harshest tones in this part came steeped and dulcified in good humour. He made his defects a grace. His exact declamatory manner, as he managed it, only served to convey the points of his dialogue with more precision. It seemed to head the shafts to carry them deeper. Not one of his sparkling sentences was lost. I remember minutely how he delivered each in succession, and cannot by any effort imagine how any of them could

be altered for the better. No man could deliver brilliant dialogue—the dialogue of Congreve or of Wycherley—because none understood it—half so well as John Kemble. His Valentine, in Love for Love, was, to my recollection, faultless. He flagged sometimes in the intervals of tragic passion. He would slumber over the level parts of an heroic character. His Macbeth has been known to nod. But he always seemed to me to be particularly alive to pointed and witty dialogue. The relaxing levities of tragedy have not been touched by any since him—the playful court-bred spirit in which he condescended to the players in Hamlet—the sportive relief which he threw into the darker shades of Richard—disappeared with [1]him. He had his sluggish moods, his torpors—but they were the halting-stones and resting-places of his tragedy—politic savings, and fetches of the breath—husbandry of the lungs, where nature pointed him to be an economist—rather, I think, than errors of the judgment. They were, at worst, less painful than the eternal tormenting unappeasable vigilance, the 'lidless dragon eyes', of present fashionable tragedy.[2]

ON THE ACTING OF MUNDEN

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Not many nights ago [3]I had come home from seeing this extraordinary performer in Cockletop; and when I retired to my pillow, his whimsical image still stuck by me, in a manner as to threaten sleep. In vain I tried to divest myself of it, by conjuring up the most opposite associations. I resolved to be serious. I raised up the

[1] him. He had] him. Tragedy is become a uniform dead weight. They have fastened lead to her buskins. She never pulls them off for the ease of a moment. To invert a commonplace from Niobe, she never forgets herself to liquefaction. John had 1822. [2] *For the remainder of the* L. M. *article of April*, 1822, *see Editor's Notes.* [3] I, my, me, myself, *in this and the next paragraph, replace* we, our, us, ourselves, *in the texts of* 1819 *and* 1822.

gravest topics of life; private misery, public calamity. All would not do.

> ————There the antic sate
> Mocking our state—

his queer visnomy—his bewildering costume—all the strange things which he had raked together—his serpentine rod, swagging about in his pocket—Cleopatra's tear, and the rest of his relics—O'Keefe's wild farce, and *his* wilder commentary—till the passion of laughter, like grief in excess, relieved itself by its own weight, inviting the sleep which in the first instance it had driven away.

But I was not to escape so easily. No sooner did I fall into slumbers, than the same image, only more perplexing, assailed me in the shape of dreams. Not one Munden, but five hundred, were dancing before me, like the faces which, whether you will or no, come when you have been taking opium—all the strange combinations, which this strangest of all strange mortals ever shot his proper countenance into, from the day he came commissioned to dry up the tears of the town for the loss of the now almost forgotten Edwin. O for the power of the pencil to have fixed them when I awoke! A season or two since there was exhibited a Hogarth gallery. I do not see why there should not be a Munden gallery. In richness and variety the latter would not fall far short of the former.

There is one face of [1]Farley, one face of Knight, one (but what a one it is!) of Liston; but Munden has none that you can properly pin down, and call *his*. When you think he has exhausted his battery of looks, in unaccountable warfare with your gravity, suddenly he sprouts out an entirely new set of features, like Hydra. He is not one, but legion. Not so much a comedian, as a company. If his name could be multiplied like his countenance, it might fill a play-bill. He, and he alone, literally *makes faces:* applied to any other person, the phrase is a mere figure, denoting certain modifications of the human countenance. Out of some invisible wardrobe he dips for faces, as his friend Suett used for wigs, and fetches them out as easily. I should not be surprised to see him some

[1] Farley] Emery 1819.

day put out the head of a river horse; or come forth a pewitt, or lapwing, some feathered metamorphosis.

I have seen this gifted actor in Sir Christopher Curry—in Old Dornton—diffuse a glow of sentiment which has made the pulse of a crowded theatre beat like that of one man; when he has come in aid of the pulpit, doing good to the moral heart of a people. I have seen some faint approaches to this sort of excellence in other players. But in the [1]grand grotesque of farce, Munden stands out as single and unaccompanied as Hogarth. Hogarth, strange to tell, had no followers. The school of Munden began, and must end with himself.

Can any man *wonder*, like him? can any man *see ghosts*, like him? or *fight with his own shadow*—'SESSA'—as he does in that strangely-neglected thing, the Cobbler of Preston—where his alternations from the Cobbler to the Magnifico, and from the Magnifico to the Cobbler, keep the brain of the spectator in as wild a ferment, as if some Arabian Night were being acted before [2]him. Who like him can throw, or ever attempted to throw, a preternatural interest over the commonest daily-life objects? A table, or a joint stool, in his conception, rises into a dignity equivalent to Cassiopeia's chair. It is invested with constellatory importance. You could not speak of it with more deference, if it were mounted into the firmament. A beggar in the hands of Michael Angelo, says Fuseli, rose the Patriarch of Poverty. So the gusto of Munden antiquates and ennobles what it touches. His pots and his ladles are as grand and primal as the seething-pots and hooks seen in old prophetic vision. A tub of butter, contemplated by him, amounts to a Platonic idea. He understands a leg of mutton in its quiddity. He stands wondering, amid the common-place materials of life, like primæval man with the sun and stars about [3]him.

[1] grand grotesque of farce] 'sublime of farce' 1819, 1822. [2] him.] him, or as if Thalaba were no tale! 1819, 1822. [3] him.] him. This faint sketch we beg to be taken as a mere corollary to some admirable strictures on the character of this great performer, in a paper signed T. N. T. which appeared some months back in the *Champion*. *Non tam certandi cupidus quam te imitari aveo.* 1819.

THE LAST ESSAYS OF ELIA

PREFACE

By a Friend of the late Elia

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. vii, no. xxxvii, p. 19 (Jan., 1823). Collected, with some omissions, in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

[1]This poor gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature.

To say truth, it is time he were gone. The humour of the thing, if there were ever much in it, was pretty well exhausted; and a two years' and a half existence has been a tolerable duration for a phantom.

I am now at liberty to confess, that much which I have heard objected to my late friend's writings was well-founded. Crude they are, I grant you—a sort of unlicked, incondite things—villainously pranked in an affected array of antique modes and phrases. They had not been *his*, if they had been other than such; and better it is, that a writer should be natural in a self-pleasing quaintness, than to affect a naturalness (so called) that should be strange to him. Egotistical they have been pronounced by some who did not know, that what he tells us, as of himself, was often true only (historically) of another; as in [2]a former Essay (to save many instances)—where under the *first person* (his favourite figure) he shadows forth the forlorn estate of a country-boy placed at a London school, far from his friends and connections—in direct opposition to his own early history. If it be egotism to imply and twine with his own identity the griefs and affections of another—making himself many, or reducing many unto

[1] *For the text of this Preface as printed in the* L. M., *Jan.*, 1823, *see Editor's Notes.* [2] A former] his fourth 1822.

himself—then is the skilful novelist, who all along brings in his hero, or heroine, speaking of themselves, the greatest egotist of all; who yet has never, therefore, been accused of that narrowness. And how shall the intenser dramatist escape being faulty, who doubtless, under cover of passion uttered by another, oftentimes gives blameless vent to his most inward feelings and expresses his own story modestly?

My late friend was in many respects a singular character. Those who did not like him, hated him; and some, who once liked him, afterwards became his bitterest haters. The truth is, he gave himself too little concern what he uttered, and in whose presence. He observed neither time nor place, and would e'en out with what came uppermost. With the severe religionist he would pass for a free-thinker; while the other faction set him down for a bigot, or persuaded themselves that he belied his sentiments. Few understood him; and I am not certain that at all times he quite understood himself. He too much affected that dangerous figure —irony. He sowed doubtful speeches, and reaped plain, unequivocal hatred.—He would interrupt the gravest discussion with some light jest; and yet, perhaps, not quite irrelevant in ears that could understand it. Your long and much talkers hated him. The informal habit of his mind, joined to an inveterate impediment of speech, forbade him to be an orator; and he seemed determined that no one else should play that part when he was present. He was *petit* and ordinary in his person and appearance. I have seen him sometimes in what is called good company, but where he has been a stranger, sit silent, and be suspected for an odd fellow; till some unlucky occasion provoking it, he would stutter out some senseless pun (not altogether senseless perhaps, if rightly taken), which has stamped his character for the evening. It was hit or miss with him; but nine times out of ten, he contrived by this device to send away a whole company his enemies. His conceptions rose kindlier than his utterance, and his happiest *impromptus* had the appearance of effort. He has been accused of trying to be witty, when in truth he was but struggling to give his poor thoughts articulation. He chose his companions for some individuality of character which they manifested.—Hence, not many persons of

science, and few professed *literati*, were of his councils. They were, for the most part, persons of an uncertain fortune; and, as to such people commonly nothing is more obnoxious than a gentleman of settled (though moderate) income, he passed with most of them for a great miser. To my knowledge this was a mistake. His *intimados*, to confess a truth, were in the world's eye a ragged regiment. He found them floating on the surface of society; and the colour, or something else, in the weed pleased him. The burrs stuck to him—but they were good and loving burrs for all that. He never greatly cared for the society of what are called good people. If any of these were scandalised (and offences were sure to arise), he could not help it. When he has been remonstrated with for not making more concessions to the feelings of good people, he would retort by asking, what one point did these good people ever concede to him? He was temperate in his meals and diversions, but always kept a little on this side of abstemiousness. Only in the use of the Indian weed he might be thought a little excessive. He took it, he would say, as a solvent of speech. Marry—as the friendly vapour ascended, how his prattle would curl up sometimes with it! the ligaments, which tongue-tied him, were loosened, and the stammerer proceeded a statist!

I do not know whether I ought to bemoan or rejoice that my old friend is departed. His jests were beginning to grow obsolete, and his stories to be found out. He felt the approaches of age; and while he pretended to cling to life, you saw how slender were the ties left to bind him. Discoursing with him latterly on this subject, he expressed himself with a pettishness, which I thought unworthy of him. In our walks about his suburban retreat (as he called it) at Shacklewell, some children belonging to a school of industry had met us, and bowed and curtseyed, as he thought, in an especial manner to *him*. 'They take me for a visiting governor,' he muttered earnestly. He had a horror, which he carried to a foible, of looking like anything important and parochial. He thought that he approached nearer to that stamp daily. He had a general aversion from being treated like a grave or respectable character, and kept a wary eye upon the advances of age

that should so entitle him. He herded always, while it was possible, with people younger than himself. He did not conform to the march of time, but was dragged along in the procession. His manners lagged behind his years. He was too much of the boy-man. The *toga virilis* never sate gracefully on his shoulders. The impressions of infancy had burnt into him, and he resented the impertinence of manhood. These were weaknesses ; but such as they were, they are a key to explicate some of his writings.

BLAKESMOOR IN H——SHIRE

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. x, no. lvii, p. 225 (Sept., 1824). Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

I DO not know a pleasure more affecting than to range at will over the deserted apartments of some fine old family mansion. The traces of extinct grandeur admit of a better passion than envy : and contemplations on the great and good, whom we fancy in succession to have been its inhabitants, weave for us illusions, incompatible with the bustle of modern occupancy, and vanities of foolish present aristocracy. The same difference of feeling, I think, attends us between entering an empty and a crowded church. In the latter it is chance but some present human frailty—an act of inattention on the part of some of the auditory—or a trait of affectation, or worse, vain-glory, on that of the preacher—puts us by our best thoughts, disharmonising the place and the occasion. But would'st thou know the beauty of holiness ?—go alone on some week-day, borrowing the keys of good Master Sexton, traverse the cool aisles of some country church : think of the piety that has kneeled there—the congregations, old and young, that have found consolation there—the meek pastor—the docile parishioner. With no disturbing emotions, no cross conflicting comparisons, drink in the tranquillity of the place, till thou thyself become as fixed and motionless as the marble effigies that kneel and weep around thee.

Journeying northward lately, I could not resist going some few miles out of my road to look upon the remains of an old great house with which I had been impressed

in this way in infancy. I was apprised that the owner of it had lately pulled it down; still I had a vague notion that it could not all have perished, that so much solidity with magnificence could not have been crushed all at once into the mere dust and rubbish which I found it.

The work of ruin had proceeded with a swift hand indeed, and the demolition of a few weeks had reduced it to—an antiquity.

I was astonished at the indistinction of everything. Where had stood the great gates? What bounded the court-yard? Whereabout did the out-houses commence? a few bricks only lay as representatives of that which was so stately and so spacious.

Death does not shrink up his human victim at this rate. The burnt ashes of a man weigh more in their proportion.

Had I seen these brick-and-mortar knaves at their process of destruction, at the plucking of every panel I should have felt the varlets at my heart. I should have cried out to them to spare a plank at least out of the cheerful store-room, in whose hot window-seat I used to sit and read Cowley, with the grass-plat before, and the hum and flappings of that one solitary wasp that ever haunted it about me—it is in mine ears now, as oft as summer returns; or a pannel of the yellow room.

Why, every plank and pannel of that house for me had magic in it. The tapestried bed-rooms—tapestry so much better than painting—not adorning merely, but peopling the wainscots—at which childhood ever and anon would steal a look, shifting its coverlid (replaced as quickly) to exercise its tender courage in a momentary eye-encounter with those stern bright visages, staring reciprocally—all Ovid on the walls, in colours vivider than his descriptions. Actæon in mid sprout, with the unappeasable prudery of Diana; and the still more provoking, and almost culinary coolness of Dan Phœbus, eel-fashion, deliberately divesting of Marsyas.

Then, that haunted room—in which old Mrs. Battle died—whereinto I have crept, but always in the day-time, with a passion of fear; and a sneaking curiosity, terror-tainted, to hold communication with the past.—*How shall they build it up again?*

It was an old deserted place, yet not so long deserted but that traces of the splendour of past inmates were everywhere apparent. Its furniture was still standing—even to the tarnished gilt leather battledores, and crumbling feathers of shuttlecocks in the nursery, which told that children had once played there. But I was a lonely child, and had the range of every apartment, knew every nook and corner, wondered and worshipped everywhere.

The solitude of childhood is not so much the mother of thought, as it is the feeder of love, and silence, and admiration. So strange a passion for the place possessed me in those years, that, though there lay—I shame to say how few roods distant from the mansion—half hid by trees, what I judged some romantic lake, such was the spell which bound me to the house, and such my carefulness not to pass its strict and proper precincts, that the idle waters lay unexplored for me; and not till late in life, curiosity prevailing over elder devotion, I found, to my astonishment, a pretty brawling brook had been the Lacus Incognitus of my infancy. Variegated views, extensive prospects—and those at no great distance from the house—I was told of such—what were they to me, being out of the boundaries of my Eden?—So far from a wish to roam, I would have drawn, methought, still closer the fences of my chosen prison; and have been hemmed in by a yet securer cincture of those excluding garden walls. I could have exclaimed with that garden-loving poet—

> Bind me, ye woodbines, in your 'twines,
> Curl me about, ye gadding vines;
> And oh so close your circles lace,
> That I may never leave this place;
> But, lest your fetters prove too weak,
> Ere I your silken bondage break,
> Do you, O brambles, chain me too,
> And, courteous briars, nail me [a]through!

I was here as in a lonely temple. Snug firesides—the low-built roof—parlours ten feet by ten—frugal boards, and all the homeliness of home—these were the condition of my birth—the wholesome soil which I was planted in. Yet, without impeachment to their tenderest lessons, I am not sorry to have had glances of something beyond;

[a] Marvell, on Appleton House, to the Lord Fairfax [1824 *only*].

and to have taken, if but a peep, in childhood, at the contrasting accidents of a great fortune.

To have the feeling of gentility, it is not necessary to have been born gentle. The pride of ancestry may be had on cheaper terms than to be obliged to an importunate race of ancestors; and the coatless antiquary in his unemblazoned cell, revolving the long line of a Mowbray's or De Clifford's pedigree, at those sounding names may warm himself into as gay a vanity as those who do inherit them. The claims of birth are ideal merely, and what herald shall go about to strip me of an idea? Is it trenchant to their swords? can it be hacked off as a spur can? or torn away like a tarnished garter?

What, else, were the families of the great to us? what pleasure should we take in their tedious genealogies, or their capitulatory brass monuments? What to us the uninterrupted current of their bloods, if our own did not answer within us to a cognate and correspondent elevation?

Or wherefore, else, O tattered and diminished 'Scutcheon that hung upon the time-worn walls of thy princely stairs, BLAKESMOOR! have I in childhood so oft stood poring upon thy mystic characters—thy emblematic supporters, with their prophetic 'Resurgam'—till, every dreg of peasantry purging off, I received into myself Very Gentility? Thou wert first in my morning eyes; and of nights, hast detained my steps from bedwards, till it was but a step from gazing at thee to dreaming on thee.

This is the only true gentry by adoption; the veritable change of blood, and, not, as empirics have fabled, by transfusion.

Who it was by dying that had earned the splendid trophy, I know not, I inquired not; but its fading rags, and colours cobweb-stained, told that its subject was of two centuries back.

And what if my ancestor at that date was some Damœtas —feeding flocks, not his own, upon the hills of Lincoln— did I in less earnest vindicate to myself the family trappings of this once proud Ægon?—repaying by a backward triumph the insults he might possibly have heaped in his life-time upon my poor pastoral progenitor.

If it were presumption so to speculate, the present owners of the mansion had least reason to complain. They had long forsaken the old house of their fathers for a newer trifle; and I was left to appropriate to myself what images I could pick up, to raise my fancy, or to soothe my vanity.

I was the true descendant of those old W——s; and not the present family of that name, who had fled the old waste places.

Mine was that gallery of good old family portraits, which as I have gone over, giving them in fancy my own family name, one—and then another—would seem to smile, reaching forward from the canvas, to recognise the new relationship; while the rest looked grave, as it seemed, at the vacancy in their dwelling, and thoughts of fled posterity.

That Beauty with the cool blue pastoral drapery, and a lamb—that hung next the great bay window—with the bright yellow H——shire hair, and eye of watchet blue —so like my Alice!—I am persuaded she was a true Elia, —Mildred Elia, I take [1]it.

Mine too, Blakesmoor, was thy noble Marble Hall, with its mosaic pavements, and its Twelve Cæsars—stately busts in marble—ranged round: of whose countenances, young reader of faces as I was, the frowning beauty of Nero, I remember, had most of my wonder; but the mild Galba had my love. There they stood in the coldness of death, yet freshness of immortality.

Mine too, thy lofty Justice Hall, with its one chair of authority, high-backed and wickered, once the terror of luckless poacher, or self-forgetful maiden—so common since, that bats have roosted in it.

Mine too—whose else?—thy costly fruit-garden, with its sun-baked southern wall; the ampler pleasure-garden, rising backwards from the house in triple terraces, with flower-pots now of palest lead, save that a speck here and there, saved from the elements, bespake their pristine state

[1] it.] it. From her, and from my passion for her—for I first learned love from a picture—Bridget took the hint of those pretty whimsical lines, which thou mayst see, if haply thou hast never seen them, Reader, in the margin. But my Mildred grew not old, like the imaginary Helen. [*The poem* Helen *is appended as a footnote.*] 1824.

to have been gilt and glittering; the verdant quarters backwarder still; and, stretching still beyond, in old formality, thy firry wilderness, the haunt of [1]the squirrel, and the day-long murmuring woodpigeon, with that antique image in the centre, God or Goddess I wist not; but child of Athens or old Rome paid never a sincerer worship to Pan or to Sylvanus in their groves, than I to that fragmental mystery.

Was it for this, that I kissed my childish hands too fervently in your idol worship, walks and windings of BLAKESMOOR! for this, or what sin of mine, has the plough passed over your pleasant places? I sometimes think that as men, when they die, do not die all, so of their extinguished habitations there may be a hope—a germ to be revivified.

POOR RELATIONS

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A POOR Relation—is the most irrelevant thing in nature,—a piece of impertinent correspondency,—an odious approximation,—a haunting conscience,—a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noontide of your prosperity,—an unwelcome remembrancer,—a perpetually recurring mortification,—a drain on your purse,—a more intolerable dun upon your pride,—a drawback upon success,—a rebuke to your rising,—a stain in your blood,—a blot on your scutcheon,—a rent in your garment,—a death's head at your banquet,—Agathocles' pot,—a Mordecai in your gate,—a Lazarus at your door,—a lion in your path,—a frog in your chamber,—a fly in your ointment,—a mote in your eye,—a triumph to your enemy—an apology to your friends,—the one thing not needful,—the hail in harvest,—the ounce of sour in a pound of [2]sweet.

He is known by his knock. Your heart telleth you 'That is Mr. ——'. A rap, between familiarity and respect; that demands, and, at the same time, seems to despair of, entertainment. He entereth smiling, and—embarrassed. He holdeth out his hand to you to shake, and—draweth

[1] the] *omit* 1824. [2] sweet.] sweet,—the bore *par excellence*. 1823.

it back again. He casually looketh in about dinner time —when the table is full. He offereth to go away, seeing you have company—but is induced to stay. He filleth a chair, and your visitor's two children are accommodated at a side table. He never cometh upon open days, when your wife says with some complacency, 'My dear, perhaps Mr. —— will drop in to-day.' He remembereth birth-days—and professeth he is fortunate to have stumbled upon one. He declareth against fish, the turbot being small—yet suffereth himself to be importuned into a slice against his first resolution. He sticketh by the port —yet will be prevailed upon to empty the remainder glass of claret, if a stranger press it upon him. He is a puzzle to the servants, who are fearful of being too obsequious, or not civil enough, to him. The guests think 'they have seen him before'. Every one speculateth upon his condition; and the most part take him to be—a tide-waiter. He calleth you by your Christian name, to imply that his other is the same with your own. He is too familiar by half, yet you wish he had less diffidence. With half the familiarity he might pass for a casual dependent; with more boldness he would be in no danger of being taken for what he is. He is too humble for a friend, yet taketh on him more state than befits a client. He is a worse guest than a country tenant, inasmuch as he bringeth up no rent—yet 'tis odds, from his garb and demeanour, that your guests take him for one. He is asked to make one at the whist table; refuseth on the score of poverty, and —resents being left out. When the company break up, he proffereth to go for a coach—and lets the servant go. He recollects your grandfather; and will thrust in some mean, and quite unimportant anecdote of—the family. He knew it when it was not quite so flourishing as 'he is blest in seeing it now'. He reviveth past situations, to institute what he calleth—favourable comparisons. With a reflecting sort of congratulation, he will inquire the price of your furniture; and insults you with a special commendation of your window-curtains. He is of opinion that the urn is the more elegant shape, but, after all, there was something more comfortable about the old tea-kettle —which you must remember. He dare say you must find

a great convenience in having a carriage of your own, and appealeth to your lady if it is not so. Inquireth if you have had your arms done on vellum yet; and did not know till lately, that such-and-such had been the crest of the family. His memory is unseasonable; his compliments perverse; his talk a trouble; his stay pertinacious; and when he goeth away, you dismiss his chair into a corner, as precipitately as possible, and feel fairly rid of two nuisances.

There is a worse evil under the sun, and that is—a female Poor Relation. You may do something with the other; you may pass him off tolerably well; but your indigent she-relative is hopeless. 'He is an old humourist,' you may say, 'and affects to go threadbare. His circumstances are better than folks would take them to be. You are fond of having a Character at your table, and truly he is one.' But in the indications of female poverty there can be no disguise. No woman dresses below herself from caprice. The truth must out without shuffling. 'She is plainly related to the L—s; or what does she at their house?' She is, in all probability, your wife's cousin. Nine times out of ten, at least, this is the case. Her garb is something between a gentlewoman and a beggar, yet the former evidently predominates. She is most provokingly humble and ostentatiously sensible to her inferiority. He may require to be repressed sometimes—*aliquando sufflaminandus erat*—but there is no raising her. You send her soup at dinner, and she begs to be helped—after the gentlemen. Mr. —— requests the honour of taking wine with her; she hesitates between Port and Madeira, and chooses the former —because he does. She calls the servant *Sir;* and insists on not troubling him to hold her plate. The housekeeper patronizes her. The children's governess takes upon her to correct her, when she has mistaken the piano for a harpsichord.

Richard Amlet, Esq., in the play, is a notable instance of the disadvantages, to which this chimerical notion of *affinity constituting a claim to acquaintance*, may subject the spirit of a gentleman. A little foolish blood is all that is betwixt him and a lady of great estate. His stars are perpetually crossed by the malignant maternity of an old

woman, who persists in calling him 'her son Dick'. But she has wherewithal in the end to recompense his indignities, and float him again upon the brilliant surface, under which it had been her seeming business and pleasure all along to sink him. All men, besides, are not of Dick's temperament. I knew an Amlet in real life, who, wanting Dick's buoyancy, sank indeed. Poor W—— was of my own standing at Christ's, a fine classic, and a youth of promise. If he had a blemish, it was too much pride; but its quality was inoffensive; it was not of that sort which hardens the heart, and serves to keep inferiors at a distance; it only sought to ward off derogation from itself. It was the principle of self-respect carried as far as it could go, without infringing upon that respect, which he would have every one else equally maintain for himself. He would have you to think alike with him on this topic. Many a quarrel have I had with him, when we were rather older boys, and our tallness made us more obnoxious to observation in the blue clothes, because I would not [1]thread the alleys and blind ways of the town with him to elude notice, when we have been out together on a holiday in the streets of this sneering and prying metropolis. W—— went, sore with these notions, to Oxford, where the dignity and sweetness of a scholar's life, meeting with the alloy of a humble introduction, wrought in him a passionate devotion to the place, with a profound aversion from the society. The servitor's gown (worse than his school array) clung to him with Nessian venom. He thought himself ridiculous in a garb, under which Latimer must have walked erect; and in which Hooker, in his young days, possibly flaunted in a vein of no discommendable vanity. In the depth of college shades, or in his lonely chamber, the poor student shrunk from observation. He found shelter among books, which insult not; and studies, that ask no questions of a youth's finances. He was lord of his library, and seldom cared for looking out beyond his domains. The healing influence of studious pursuits was upon him, to soothe and to abstract. He was almost a healthy man; when the waywardness of his fate broke out against him with a second and worse malignity. The father of W——

[1] thread] thrid 1823.

had hitherto exercised the humble profession of house-painter at N——, near Oxford. A supposed interest with some of the heads of the colleges had now induced him to take up his abode in that city, with the hope of being employed upon some public works which were talked of. From that moment I read in the countenance of the young man, the determination which at length tore him from academical pursuits for ever. To a person unacquainted with our Universities, the distance between the gownsmen and the townsmen, as they are called—the trading part of the latter especially—is carried to an excess that would appear harsh and incredible. The temperament of W——'s father was diametrically the reverse of his own. Old W—— was a little, busy, cringing tradesman, who, with his son upon his arm, would stand bowing and scraping, cap in hand, to anything that wore the semblance of a gown—insensible to the winks and opener remonstrances of the young man, to whose chamber-fellow, or equal in standing, perhaps, he was thus obsequiously and gratuitously ducking. Such a state of things could not last. W—— must change the air of Oxford or be suffocated. He chose the former; and let the sturdy moralist, who strains the point of the filial duties as high as they can bear, censure the dereliction; he cannot estimate the struggle. I stood with W——, the last afternoon I ever saw him, under the eaves of his paternal dwelling. It was in the fine lane leading from the High-street to the back of ***** college, where W—— kept his rooms. He seemed thoughtful, and more reconciled. I ventured to rally him—finding him in a better mood—upon a representation of the Artist Evangelist, which the old man, whose affairs were beginning to flourish, had caused to be set up in a splendid sort of frame over his really handsome shop, either as a token of prosperity, or badge of gratitude to his saint. W—— looked up at the Luke, and, like Satan, 'knew his mounted sign—and fled.' A letter on his father's table the next morning, announced that he had accepted a commission in a regiment about to embark for Portugal. He was among the first who perished before the walls of St. Sebastian.

I do not know how, upon a subject which I began with treating half seriously, I should have fallen upon a recital

so eminently painful ; but this theme of poor relationship is replete with so much matter for tragic as well as comic associations, that it is difficult to keep the account distinct without blending. The earliest impressions which I received on this matter, are certainly not attended with anything painful, or very humiliating, in the recalling. At my father's table (no very splendid one) was to be found, every Saturday, the mysterious figure of an aged gentleman, clothed in neat black, of a sad yet comely appearance. His deportment was of the essence of gravity ; his words few or none ; and I was not to make a noise in his presence. I had little inclination to have done so—for my cue was to admire in silence. A particular elbow chair was appropriated to him, which was in no case to be violated. A peculiar sort of sweet pudding, which appeared on no other occasion, distinguished the days of his coming. I used to think him a prodigiously rich man. All I could make out of him was, that he and my father had been schoolfellows a world ago at Lincoln, and that he came from the Mint. The Mint I knew to be a place where all the money was coined—and I thought he was the owner of all that money. Awful ideas of the Tower twined themselves about his presence. He seemed above human infirmities and passions. A sort of melancholy grandeur invested him. From some inexplicable doom I fancied him obliged to go about in an eternal suit of mourning ; a captive—a stately being, let out of the Tower on Saturdays. Often have I wondered at the temerity of my father, who, in spite of an habitual general respect which we all in common manifested towards him, would venture now and then to stand up against him in some argument, touching their youthful days. The houses of the ancient city of Lincoln are divided (as most of my readers know) between the dwellers on the hill, and in the valley. This marked distinction formed an obvious division between the boys who lived above (however brought together in a common school) and the boys whose paternal residence was on the plain ; a sufficient cause of hostility in the code of these young Grotiuses. My father had been a leading Mountaineer ; and would still maintain the general superiority, in skill and hardihood, of the *Above Boys* (his own faction) over the *Below Boys*

(so were they called), of which party his contemporary had been a chieftain. Many and hot were the skirmishes on this topic—the only one upon which the old gentleman was ever brought out—and bad blood bred; even sometimes almost to the recommencement (so I expected) of actual hostilities. But my father, who scorned to insist upon advantages, generally contrived to turn the conversation upon some adroit by-commendation of the old Minster; in the general preference of which, before all other cathedrals in the island, the dweller on the hill, and the plain-born, could meet on a conciliating level, and lay down their less important differences. Once only I saw the old gentleman really ruffled, and I remember with anguish the thought that came over me: 'Perhaps he will never come here again.' He had been pressed to take another plate of the viand, which I have already mentioned as the indispensable concomitant of his visits. He had refused, with a resistance amounting to rigour—when my aunt, an old Lincolnian, but who had something of this, in common with my cousin Bridget, that she would sometimes press civility out of season—uttered the following memorable application—'Do take another slice, Mr. Billet, for you do not get pudding every day.' The old gentleman said nothing at the time—but he took occasion in the course of the evening, when some argument had intervened between them, to utter with an emphasis which chilled the company, and which chills me now as I write it—'Woman, you are superannuated.' John Billet did not survive long, after the digesting of this affront; but he survived long enough to assure me that peace was actually restored! and, if I remember aright, another pudding was discreetly substituted in the place of that which had occasioned the offence. He died at the Mint (Anno 1781) where he had long held, what he accounted, a comfortable independence; and with five pounds, fourteen shillings, and a penny, which were found in his escrutoire after his decease, left the world, blessing God that he had enough to bury him, and that he had never been obliged to any man for a sixpence. This was—a Poor Relation.

STAGE ILLUSION

[Printed under the title, *Imperfect Dramatic Illusion* in *The London Magazine, New Series*, vol. ii, no. viii, p. 599 (Aug., 1825). Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

A PLAY is said to be well or ill acted in proportion to the scenical illusion produced. Whether such illusion can in any case be perfect, is not the question. The nearest approach to it, we are told, is, when the actor appears wholly unconscious of the presence of spectators. In tragedy—in all which is to affect the feelings—this undivided attention to his stage business, seems indispensable. Yet it is, in fact, dispensed with every day by our cleverest tragedians; and while these references to an audience, in the shape of rant or sentiment, are not too frequent or palpable, a sufficient quantity of illusion for the purposes of dramatic interest may be said to be produced in spite of them. But, tragedy apart, it may be inquired whether, in certain characters in comedy, especially those which are a little extravagant, or which involve some notion repugnant to the moral sense, it is not a proof of the highest skill in the comedian when, without absolutely appealing to an audience, he keeps up a tacit understanding with them; and makes them, unconsciously to themselves, a party in the scene. The utmost nicety is required in the mode of doing this; but we speak only of the great artists in the profession.

The most mortifying infirmity in human nature, to feel in ourselves, or to contemplate in another, is, perhaps, cowardice. To see a coward *done to the life* upon a stage would produce anything but mirth. Yet we most of us remember Jack Bannister's cowards. Could any thing be more agreeable, more pleasant? We loved the rogues. How was this effected but by the exquisite art of the actor in a perpetual sub-insinuation to us, the spectators, even in the extremity of the shaking fit, that he was not half such a coward as we took him for? We saw all the common symptoms of the malady upon him; the quivering lip, the cowering knees, the teeth chattering; and could have sworn 'that man was frightened'. But we forgot all the while—or kept it almost a secret to ourselves—that he

never once lost his self-possession; that he let out by a thousand droll looks and gestures—meant at *us*, and not at all supposed to be visible to his fellows in the scene, that his confidence in his own resources had never once deserted him. Was this a genuine picture of a coward? or not rather a likeness, which the clever artist contrived to palm upon us instead of an original; while we secretly connived at the delusion for the purpose of greater pleasure, than a more genuine counterfeiting of the imbecility, helplessness, and utter self-desertion, which we know to be concomitants of cowardice in real life, could have given us?

Why are misers so hateful in the world, and so endurable on the stage, but because the skilful actor, by a sort of sub-reference, rather than direct appeal to us, disarms the character of a great deal of its odiousness, by seeming to engage *our* compassion for the insecure tenure by which he holds his money bags and parchments? By this subtle vent half of the hatefulness of the character—the self-closeness with which in real life it coils itself up from the sympathies of men—evaporates. The miser becomes sympathetic; *i.e.* is no genuine miser. Here again a diverting likeness is substituted for a very disagreeable reality.

Spleen, irritability—the pitiable infirmities of old men, which produce only pain to behold in the realities, counterfeited upon a stage, divert not altogether for the comic appendages to them, but in part from an inner conviction that they are *being acted* before us; that a likeness only is going on, and not the thing itself. They please by being done under the life, or beside it; not *to the life*. When Gatty acts an old man, is he angry indeed? or only a pleasant counterfeit, just enough of a likeness to recognise, without pressing upon us the uneasy sense of reality?

Comedians, paradoxical as it may seem, may be too natural. It was the case with a late actor. Nothing could be more earnest or true than the manner of Mr. Emery; this told excellently in his Tyke, and characters of a tragic cast. But when he carried the same rigid exclusiveness of attention to the stage business, and wilful blindness and oblivion of everything before the curtain into his comedy, it produced a harsh and dissonant effect. He was out of keeping with the rest of the *Personæ Dramatis*. There was

as little link between him and them as betwixt himself and the audience. He was a third estate, dry, repulsive, and unsocial to all. Individually considered, his execution was masterly. But comedy is not this unbending thing; for this reason, that the same degree of credibility is not required of it as to serious scenes. The degrees of credibility demanded to the two things may be illustrated by the different sort of truth which we expect when a man tells us a mournful or a merry story. If we suspect the former of falsehood in any one tittle, we reject it altogether. Our tears refuse to flow at a suspected imposition. But the teller of a mirthful tale has latitude allowed him. We are content with less than absolute truth. 'Tis the same with dramatic illusion. We confess we love in comedy to see an audience naturalised behind the scenes, taken in into the interest of the drama, welcomed as by-standers however. There is something ungracious in a comic actor holding himself aloof from all participation or concern with those who are come to be diverted by him. Macbeth must see the dagger, and no ear but his own be told of it; but an old fool in farce may think he *sees something*, and by conscious words and looks express it, as plainly as he can speak, to pit, box, and gallery. When an impertinent in tragedy, an Osric, for instance, breaks in upon the serious passions of the scene, we approve of the contempt with which he is treated. But when the pleasant impertinent of comedy, in a piece purely meant to give delight, and raise mirth out of whimsical perplexities, worries the studious man with taking up his leisure, or making his house his home, the same sort of contempt expressed (however *natural*) would destroy the balance of delight in the spectators. To make the intrusion comic, the actor who plays the annoyed man must a little desert nature; he must, in short, be thinking of the audience, and express only so much dissatisfaction and peevishness as is consistent with the pleasure of comedy. In other words, his perplexity must seem half put on. If he repel the intruder with the sober set face of a man in earnest, and more especially if he deliver his expostulations in a tone which in the world must necessarily provoke a duel; his real-life manner will destroy the whimsical and purely dramatic existence of the

other character (which to render it comic demands an antagonist comicality on the part of the character opposed to it), and convert what was meant for mirth, rather than belief, into a downright piece of impertinence indeed, which would raise no diversion in us, but rather stir pain, to see inflicted in earnest upon any [1]unworthy person. A very judicious actor (in most of his parts) seems to have fallen into an error of this sort in his playing with Mr. Wrench in the farce of Free and Easy.

Many instances would be tedious; these may suffice to show that comic acting at least does not always demand from the performer that strict abstraction from all reference to an audience, which is exacted of it; but that in some cases a sort of compromise may take place, and all the purposes of dramatic delight be attained by a judicious understanding, not too openly announced, between the ladies and gentlemen—on both sides of the curtain.

TO THE SHADE OF ELLISTON

[Printed along with the following essay, under the title, *Reminiscences of Elliston*, in *The Englishman's Magazine*, Aug., 1831, p. 554. Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

JOYOUSEST of once embodied spirits, whither at length hast thou flown? to what genial region are we permitted to conjecture that thou hast flitted?

Art thou sowing thy WILD OATS yet (the harvest time was still to come with thee) upon casual sands of Avernus? or art thou enacting ROVER (as we would gladlier think) by wandering Elysian streams?

This mortal frame, while thou didst play thy brief antics amongst us, was in truth any thing but a prison to thee, as the vain Platonist dreams of this *body* to be no better than a county gaol, forsooth, or some house of durance vile, whereof the five senses are the fetters. Thou knewest better than to be in a hurry to cast off those gyves; and had notice to quit, I fear, before thou wert quite ready to abandon this fleshly tenement. It was thy Pleasure House,

[1] unworthy] worthy 1825; unworthy *is probably an error of the printer.*

thy Palace of Dainty Devices; thy Louvre, or thy White Hall.

What new mysterious lodgings dost thou tenant now? or when may we expect thy aërial house-warming?

Tartarus we know, and we have read of the Blessed Shades; now cannot I intelligibly fancy thee in either.

Is it too much to hazard a conjecture, that (as the schoolmen admitted a receptacle apart for Patriarchs and unchrisom Babes) there may exist—not far perchance from that storehouse of all vanities, which Milton saw in visions—a LIMBO somewhere for PLAYERS? and that

> Up thither like aërial vapours fly
> Both all Stage things, and all that in Stage things
> Built their fond hopes of glory, or lasting fame?
> All the unaccomplish'd works of Authors' hands,
> Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
> Damn'd upon earth, fleet thither—
> Play, Opera, Farce, with all their trumpery—

There, by the neighbouring moon (by some not improperly supposed thy Regent Planet upon earth) mayst thou not still be acting thy managerial [1]pranks, great disembodied Lessee? but Lessee still, and still a Manager.

In Green Rooms, impervious to mortal eye, the muse beholds thee wielding posthumous empire.

Thin ghosts of Figurantes (never plump on earth) [2]circle thee in endlessly, and still their song is *Fye on sinful Phantasy.*

Magnificent were thy capriccios on this globe of earth, ROBERT WILLIAM ELLISTON! for as yet we know not thy new name in heaven.

It irks me to think, that, stript of thy regalities, thou shouldst ferry over, a poor forked shade, in crazy Stygian

[1] pranks] capriccios 1831. [2] circle . . . *Phantasy.*] admire, while with uplifted toe retributive you inflict vengeance incorporeal upon the shadowy rear of obnoxious author, just arrived—

> ————what seem'd his tail,
> The likeness of a kingly kick had on.
> * * * * * *
> Yet soon he heals; for spirits that live throughout
> Vital in every part, not as frail man
> In entrails, head, or heart, liver, or reins,
> Can in their liquid texture mortal wound
> Receive no more, than can the liquid air.
> All heart they live, all head, &c. 1831.

wherry. Methinks I hear the old boatman, paddling by the weedy wharf, with raucid voice, bawling 'SCULLS, SCULLS' : to which, with waving hand, and majestic action, thou deignest no reply, other than in two curt monosyllables, 'NO : OARS.'

But the laws of Pluto's kingdom know small difference between king, and cobbler ; manager, and call-boy ; and, if haply your dates of life were conterminant, you are quietly taking your passage, cheek by cheek (O ignoble levelling of Death) with the shade of some recently departed candle-snuffer.

But mercy ! what strippings, what tearing off of histrionic robes, and private vanities ! what denudations to the bone, before the surly Ferryman will admit you to set a foot within his battered lighter !

Crowns, sceptres ; shield, sword, and truncheon ; thy own coronation robes (for thou hast brought the whole property man's wardrobe with thee, enough to sink a navy) ; the judge's ermine ; the coxcomb's wig ; the snuff-box *à la Foppington*—all must overboard, he positively swears—and that ancient mariner brooks no denial ; for, since the tiresome monodrame of the old Thracian Harper, Charon, it is to be believed, hath shown small taste for theatricals.

Aye, now 'tis done. You are just boat weight ; *pura et puta anima.*

But bless me, how *little* you look !

So shall we all look—kings, and keysars—stript for the last voyage.

But the murky rogue pushes off. Adieu, pleasant, and thrice pleasant shade ! with my parting thanks for many a heavy hour of life lightened by thy harmless extravaganzas, public or domestic.

Rhadamanthus, who tries the lighter causes below, leaving to his two brethren the heavy calendars—honest Rhadamanth, always partial to players, weighing their parti-coloured existence here upon earth,—making account of the few foibles, that may have shaded thy *real life* as we call it, (though, substantially, scarcely less a vapour than thy idlest vagaries upon the boards of Drury,) as but of so many echoes, natural re-percussions, and results to be

expected from the assumed extravagancies of thy *secondary* or *mock life*, nightly upon a stage—after a lenient castigation, with rods lighter than of those Medusean ringlets, but just enough to 'whip the offending Adam out of thee'—shall courteously dismiss thee at the right hand gate—the O. P. side of Hades—that conducts to masques, and merry-makings, in the Theatre Royal of Proserpine.

PLAUDITO, ET [1]VALETO.

ELLISTONIANA

[Printed in continuation of the essay here preceding, under the title *Reminiscences of Elliston*, in *The Englishman's Magazine*, Aug., 1831, p. 556. Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

My acquaintance with the pleasant creature, whose loss we all deplore, was but slight.

[2]My first introduction to E., which afterwards ripened into an acquaintance a little on this side of intimacy, was over a counter of the Leamington Spa Library, then newly entered upon by a branch of his family. E., whom nothing misbecame—to auspicate, I suppose, the filial concern, and set it a going with a lustre—was serving in person two damsels fair, who had come into the shop ostensibly to inquire for some new publication, but in reality to have a sight of the illustrious shopman, hoping some conference. With what an air did he reach down the volume, dispassionately giving his opinion upon the worth of the work in question, and launching out into a dissertation on its comparative merits with those of certain publications of a similar stamp, its rivals! his enchanted customers fairly hanging [3]on his lips, subdued to their authoritative sentence. So have I seen a gentleman in comedy *acting* the shopman. So Lovelace sold his gloves in King Street. I admired the histrionic art, by which he contrived to carry clean away every notion of disgrace, from the occupation he had so generously submitted to; and from that hour I judged

[1] VALETO.] VALETO. | Thy friend upon earth, | Though thou did'st connive at his d——n, | Mr. H. 1831. [2] *This paragraph is printed as a footnote in* 1831. [3] on] upon 1831.

him, with no after repentance, to be a person, with whom it would be a felicity to be more acquainted.

[1]To descant upon his merits as a Comedian would be superfluous. With his blended private and professional habits alone I have to do; that harmonious fusion of the manners of the player into those of every day life, which brought the stage boards into streets, and dining-parlours, and kept up the play when the play was ended.—'I like Wrench,' a friend was saying to him one day, 'because he is the same natural, easy creature, *on* the stage, that he is *off*.' 'My case exactly,' retorted Elliston—with a charming forgetfulness, that the converse of a proposition does not always lead to the same conclusion—'I am the same person *off* the stage that I am *on*.' The inference, at first sight, seems identical; but examine it a little, and it confesses only, that the one performer was never, and the other always, *acting*.

And in truth this was the charm of Elliston's private deportment. You had a spirited performance always going on before your eyes, with nothing to pay. As where a monarch takes up his casual abode for a night, the poorest hovel which he honours by his sleeping in it, becomes *ipso facto* for that time a palace; so wherever Elliston walked, sate, or stood still, there was the theatre. He carried about with him his pit, [2]boxes, and galleries, and set up his portable playhouse at corners of streets, and in the market-places. Upon flintiest pavements he trod the boards still; and if his theme chanced to be passionate, the green baize carpet of tragedy spontaneously rose beneath his feet. Now this was hearty, and showed a love for his art. So Apelles *always* painted—in thought. So G. D. *always* poetises. I hate a lukewarm artist. I have known actors —and some of them of Elliston's own stamp—who shall have agreeably been amusing you in the part of a rake or a coxcomb, through the two or three hours of their dramatic existence; but no sooner does the curtain fall with its leaden clatter, but a spirit of lead seems to seize on all their faculties. They emerge sour, morose persons, intolerable

[1] *In* 1831 *this paragraph begins:* The anecdotes which I have to tell of him are trivial, save in as much as they may elucidate character. To descant, *etc.* [2] boxes] box 1831.

to their families, servants, &c. Another shall have been expanding your heart with generous deeds and sentiments, till it even beats with yearnings of universal sympathy; you absolutely long to go home, and do some good action. The play seems tedious, till you can get fairly out of the house, and realise your laudable intentions. At length the final bell rings, and this cordial representative of all that is amiable in human breasts steps forth—a miser. Elliston was more of a piece. Did he *play* Ranger? and did Ranger fill the general bosom of the town with satisfaction? why should *he* not be Ranger, and diffuse the same cordial satisfaction among his private circles? with *his* temperament, *his* animal spirits, *his* good-nature, *his* follies perchance, could he do better than identify himself with his impersonation? Are we to like a pleasant rake, or coxcomb, on the stage, and give ourselves airs of aversion for the identical character presented to us in actual life? or what would the performer have gained by divesting himself of the impersonation? Could the man Elliston have been essentially different from his part, even if he had avoided to reflect to us studiously, in private circles, the airy briskness, the frowardness, and 'scapegoat trickeries of his prototype?

'But there is something not natural in this everlasting *acting;* we want the real man.'

Are you quite sure that it is not the man himself, whom you cannot, or will not see, under some adventitious trappings, which, nevertheless, sit not at all inconsistently upon him? What if it is the nature of some men to be highly artificial? The fault is least reprehensible in *players.* Cibber was his own Foppington, with almost as much wit as Vanburgh could add to it.

'My conceit of his person',—it is Ben Jonson speaking of Lord Bacon,—'was never increased towards him by his *place* or *honours.* But I have, and do reverence him for the *greatness,* that was only proper to himself; in that he seemed to me ever one of the *greatest* men, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that heaven would give him strength; for *greatness* he could not want.'

The quality here commended was scarcely less conspicuous in the subject of these idle reminiscences, than in my Lord Verulam. Those who have imagined that an unexpected

elevation to the direction of a great London Theatre, affected the consequence of Elliston, or at all changed his nature, knew not the essential *greatness* of the man whom they disparage. It was my fortune to encounter him near St. Dunstan's Church (which, with its punctual giants, is now no more than dust and a shadow), on the morning of his election to that high office. Grasping my hand with a look of significance, he only uttered,—'Have you heard the news ?'—then with another look following up the blow, he subjoined, 'I am the future Manager of Drury Lane Theatre.'—Breathless as he saw me, he stayed not for congratulation or reply, but mutely stalked away, leaving me to chew upon his new-blown dignities at leisure. In fact, nothing could be said to it. Expressive silence alone could muse his praise. This was in his *great* style.

But was he less *great*, (be witness, O ye Powers of Equanimity, that supported in the ruins of Carthage the consular exile, and more recently transmuted for a more illustrious exile, the barren constableship of Elba into an image of Imperial France), when, in melancholy after-years, again, much near the same spot, I met him, when that sceptre had been wrested from his hand, and his dominion was curtailed to the petty managership, and part proprietorship, of the small Olympic, *his Elba?* He still played nightly upon the boards of Drury, but in parts, alas! allotted to him, not magnificently distributed by him. Waiving his great loss as nothing, and magnificently sinking the sense of fallen *material* grandeur in the more liberal resentment of depreciations done to his more lofty *intellectual* pretensions, 'Have you heard' (his customary exordium)—'have you heard,' said he, 'how they treat me ? they put me in *comedy*.' Thought I—but his finger on his lips forbade any verbal interruption—'where could they have put you better ?' Then, after a pause—'Where I formerly played Romeo, I now play Mercutio,'—and so again he stalked away, neither staying, nor caring for, responses.

O, it was a rich scene,—but Sir A—— C——, the best of story-tellers and surgeons, who mends a lame narrative almost as well as he sets a fracture, alone could do justice to it—that I was witness to, in the tarnished room (that had once been green) of that same little Olympic. There,

after his deposition from Imperial Drury, he substituted a throne. That Olympic Hill was his 'highest heaven'; himself 'Jove in his chair'. There he sat in state, while before him, on complaint of prompter, was brought for judgment—how shall I describe her?—one of those little tawdry things that flirt at the tails of choruses—a probationer for the town, in either of its senses—the pertest little drab—a dirty fringe and appendage of the lamps' smoke—who, it seems, on some disapprobation expressed by a 'highly respectable' audience, had precipitately quitted her station on the boards, and withdrawn her small talents in disgust.

'And how dare you,' said her Manager—assuming a censorial severity which would have crushed the confidence of a Vestris, and disarmed that beautiful Rebel herself of her professional caprices—I verily believe, he thought *her* standing before him—'how dare you, Madam, withdraw yourself, without a notice, from your theatrical duties?' 'I was hissed, Sir.' 'And you have the presumption to decide upon the taste of the town?' 'I don't know that, Sir, but I will never stand to be hissed,' was the subjoinder of young Confidence—when gathering up his features into one significant mass of wonder, pity, and expostulatory indignation—in a lesson never to have been lost upon a creature less forward than she who stood before him—his words were these: 'They have hissed *me*.'

'Twas the identical argument *a fortiori*, which the son of Peleus uses to Lycaon trembling under his lance, to persuade him to take his destiny with a good grace. 'I too am mortal.' And it is to be believed that in both cases the rhetoric missed of its application, for want of a proper understanding with the faculties of the respective recipients.

'Quite an Opera pit,' he said to me, as he was courteously conducting me over the benches of his Surrey Theatre, the last retreat, and recess, of his every-day waning grandeur.

Those who knew Elliston, will know the *manner* in which he pronounced the latter sentence of the few words I am about to record. One proud day to me he took his roast mutton with us in the Temple, to which I had superadded a preliminary haddock. After a rather plentiful partaking of the meagre banquet, not unrefreshed with the humbler

sort of liquors, I made a sort of apology for the humility of the fare, observing that for my own part I never ate but of one dish at dinner. 'I too never eat but one thing at dinner'—was his reply—then after a pause—'reckoning fish as nothing.' The manner was all. It was as if by one peremptory sentence he had decreed the annihilation of all the savory esculents, which the pleasant and nutritious-food-giving Ocean pours forth upon poor humans from her watery bosom. This was *greatness*, tempered with considerate *tenderness* to the feelings of his scanty but welcoming entertainer.

Great wert thou in thy life, Robert William Elliston! and *not lessened* in thy death, if report speak truly, which says that thou didst direct that thy mortal remains should repose under no inscription but one of pure *Latinity*. Classical was thy bringing up! and beautiful was the feeling on thy last bed, which, connecting the man with the boy, took thee back in thy latest exercise of imagination, to the days when, undreaming of Theatres and Managerships, thou wert a scholar, and an early ripe one, under the roofs builded by the munificent and pious Colet. For thee the Pauline Muses weep. In elegies, that shall silence this crude prose, they shall celebrate thy praise.

DETACHED THOUGHTS ON BOOKS AND READING

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To mind the inside of a book is to entertain one's self with the forced product of another man's brain. Now I think a man of quality and breeding may be much amused with the natural sprouts of his own.
Lord Foppington in the Relapse.

An ingenious acquaintance of my own was so much struck with this bright sally of his Lordship, that he has left off reading altogether, to the great improvement of his originality. At the hazard of losing some credit on this head, I must confess that I dedicate no inconsiderable portion of my time to other people's thoughts. I dream away my life in others' speculations. I love to lose myself

in other men's minds. When I am not walking, I am reading; I cannot sit and think. Books think for me.

I have no repugnances. Shaftesbury is not too genteel for me, nor Jonathan Wild too low. I can read any thing which I call a *book*. There are things in that shape which I cannot allow for such.

In this catalogue of *books which are no books—biblia a-biblia*—I reckon Court Calendars, Directories, Pocket [1]Books, Draught Boards bound and lettered at the back, Scientific Treatises, Almanacks, Statutes at Large; the works of Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, Beattie, Soame Jenyns, and, generally, all those volumes which 'no gentleman's library should be without': the Histories of Flavius Josephus (that learned Jew), and Paley's Moral Philosophy. With these exceptions, I can read almost any thing. I bless my stars for a taste so catholic, so unexcluding.

I confess that it moves my spleen to see these *things in books' clothing* perched upon shelves, like false saints, usurpers of true shrines, intruders into the sanctuary, thrusting out the legitimate occupants. To reach down a well-bound semblance of a volume, and hope it is some kind-hearted play-book, then, opening what 'seem its leaves', to come bolt upon a withering Population Essay. To expect a Steele, or a Farquhar, and find—Adam Smith. To view a well-arranged assortment of blockheaded Encyclopædias (Anglicanas or Metropolitanas) set out in an array of Russia, or Morocco, when a tithe of that good leather would comfortably re-clothe my shivering folios; would renovate Paracelsus himself, and enable old Raymund [2]Lully to look like himself again in the world. I never see these impostors, but I long to strip them, to warm my ragged veterans in their spoils.

To be strong-backed and neat-bound is the desideratum of a volume. Magnificence comes after. This, when it can be afforded, is not to be lavished upon all kinds of books indiscriminately. I would not dress a set of Magazines, for instance, in full suit. The dishabille, or half-binding (with Russia backs ever) is *our* costume. A Shakespeare, or a Milton (unless the first editions), it were mere foppery

[1] Books] Books (the Literary excepted) 1822. [2] Lully] Lully—I have them both, reader—1822.

to trick out in gay apparel. The possession of them confers no distinction. The exterior of them (the things themselves being so common), strange to say, raises no sweet emotions, no tickling sense of property in the owner. Thomson's Seasons, again, looks best (I maintain it) a little torn, and dog's-eared. How beautiful to a genuine lover of reading are the sullied leaves, and worn out appearance, nay, the very odour (beyond Russia), if we would not forget kind feelings in fastidiousness, of an old 'Circulating Library' Tom Jones, or Vicar of Wakefield! How they speak of the thousand thumbs, that have turned over their pages with delight!—of the lone sempstress, whom they may have cheered (milliner, or harder-working mantua-maker) after her long day's needle-toil, running far into midnight, when she has snatched an hour, ill spared from sleep, to steep her cares, as in some Lethean cup, in spelling out their enchanting contents! Who would have them a whit less soiled? What better condition could we desire to see them in?

In some respects the better a book is, the less it demands from binding. Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, and all that class of perpetually self-reproductive volumes—Great Nature's Stereotypes—we see them individually perish with less regret, because we know the copies of them to be 'eterne'. But where a book is at once both good and rare—where the individual is almost the species, and when *that* perishes,

> We know not where is that Promethean torch
> That can its light relumine—

such a book, for instance, as the Life of the Duke of Newcastle, by his Duchess—no casket is rich enough, no casing sufficiently durable, to honour and keep safe such a jewel.

Not only rare volumes of this description, which seem hopeless ever to be reprinted; but old editions of writers, such as Sir Philip Sidney, Bishop Taylor, Milton in his prose-works, Fuller—of whom we *have* reprints, yet the books themselves, though they go about, and are talked of here and there, we know, have not endenizened themselves (nor possibly ever will) in the national heart, so as to become stock books—it is good to possess these in durable and costly covers. I do not care for a First Folio

of [1]Shakspeare. I rather prefer the common editions of Rowe and Tonson, without notes, and with *plates*, which, being so execrably bad, serve as maps, or modest remembrancers, to the text; and without pretending to any supposable emulation with it, are so much better than the Shakspeare gallery *engravings*, which *did*. I have a community of feeling with my countrymen about his Plays, and I like those editions of him best, which have been oftenest tumbled about and handled.—On the contrary, I cannot read Beaumont and Fletcher but in Folio. The Octavo editions are painful to look at. I have no sympathy with [2]them. If they were as much read as the current editions of the other poet, I should prefer them in that shape to the older one. I do not know a more heartless sight than the reprint of the Anatomy of Melancholy. What need was there of unearthing the bones of that fantastic old great man, to expose them in a winding-sheet of the [3]newest fashion to modern censure? what hapless stationer could dream of Burton ever becoming popular?—The wretched Malone could not do worse, when he bribed the sexton of Stratford church to let him white-wash the painted effigy of old Shakspeare, which stood there, in rude but lively fashion depicted, to the very colour of the cheek, the eye, the eye-brow, hair, the very dress he used to wear —the only authentic testimony we had, however imperfect, of these curious parts and parcels of him. They covered him over with a coat of white paint. By ——, if I had been a justice of peace for Warwickshire, I would have clapt both commentator and sexton fast in the stocks, for a pair of meddling sacrilegious varlets.

I think I see them at their work—these sapient trouble-tombs.

Shall I be thought fantastical, if I confess, that the names of some of our poets sound sweeter, and have a finer relish to the ear—to mine, at least—than that of Milton or of Shakspeare? It may be, that the latter are more staled and rung upon in common discourse. The sweetest names,

[1] Shakspeare.] Shakspeare. You cannot make a *pet* book of an author whom everybody reads. 1822. [2] them.] them, nor with Mr. Gifford's Ben Jonson. 1822. [3] newest fashion] latest edition 1822.

and which carry a perfume in the mention, are, Kit Marlowe, Drayton, Drummond of Hawthornden, and Cowley.

Much depends upon *when* and *where* you read a book. In the five or six impatient minutes, before the dinner is quite ready, who would think of taking up the Fairy Queen for a stop-gap, or a volume of Bishop Andrewes' sermons ?

Milton almost requires a solemn service of music to be played before you enter upon him. But he brings his music, to which, who listens, had need bring docile thoughts, and purged ears.

Winter evenings—the world shut out—with less of ceremony the gentle Shakspeare enters. At such a season, the Tempest, or his own Winter's Tale—

These two poets you cannot avoid reading aloud—to yourself, or (as it chances) to some single person listening. More than one—and it degenerates into an audience.

Books of quick interest, that hurry on for incidents, are for the eye to glide over only. It will not do to read them out. I could never listen to even the better kind of modern novels without extreme irksomeness.

A newspaper, read out, is intolerable. In some of the Bank offices it is the custom (to save so much individual time) for one of the clerks—who is the best scholar—to commence upon the Times, or the Chronicle, and recite its entire contents aloud *pro bono publico*. With every advantage of lungs and elocution, the effect is singularly vapid. In barbers' shops and public-houses a fellow will get up, and spell out a paragraph, which he communicates as some discovery. Another follows with *his* selection. So the entire journal transpires at length by piece-meal. Seldom-readers are slow readers, and, without this expedient no one in the company would probably ever travel through the contents of a whole paper.

Newspapers always excite curiosity. No one ever lays one down without a feeling of disappointment.

What an eternal time that gentleman in black, at Nando's, keeps the paper ! I am sick of hearing the waiter bawling out incessantly, ' the Chronicle is in hand, [1]Sir.'

[1] Sir.'] Sir ' As in these little Diurnals I generally skip the Foreign News—the Debates—and the Politics—I find the *Morning Herald* by

Coming in to an inn at night—having ordered your supper—what can be more delightful than to find lying in the window-seat, left there time out of mind by the carelessness of some former guest—two or three numbers of the old Town and Country Magazine, with its amusing *tête-à-tête* pictures—'The Royal Lover and Lady G——;' 'The Melting Platonic and the Old Beau,'—and such like antiquated scandal? Would you exchange it—at that time, and in that place—for a better book?

Poor Tobin, who latterly fell blind, did not regret it so much for the weightier kinds of reading—the Paradise Lost, or Comus, he could have *read* to him—but he missed the pleasure of skimming over with his own eye a magazine, or a light pamphlet.

I should not care to be caught in the serious avenues of some cathedral alone, and reading *Candide*.

I do not remember a more whimsical surprise than having been once detected—by a familiar damsel—reclined at my ease upon the grass, on Primrose Hill (her Cythera), reading —*Pamela*. There was nothing in the book to make a man seriously ashamed at the exposure; but as she seated herself down by me, and seemed determined to read in company, I could have wished it had been—any other book. We read on very sociably for a few pages; and, not finding the author much to her taste, she got up, and—went away. Gentle casuist, I leave it to thee to conjecture, whether the blush (for there was one between us) was the property of the nymph or the swain in this dilemma. From me you shall never get the secret.

I am not much a friend to out-of-doors reading. I cannot settle my spirits to it. I knew a Unitarian minister, who was generally to be seen upon Snow-hill (as yet Skinner's-street *was not*), between the hours of ten and eleven in the morning, studying a volume of Lardner. I own this to have been a strain of abstraction beyond my reach. I used to admire how he sidled along, keeping clear of secular contacts. An illiterate encounter with a porter's knot, or a bread basket, would have quickly put to flight all the

far the most entertaining of them. It is an agreeable miscellany. rather than a newspaper. 1822.

theology I am master of, and have left me worse than indifferent to the five points.[1]

There is a class of street-readers, whom I can never contemplate without affection—the poor gentry, who, not having wherewithal to buy or hire a book, filch a little learning at the open stalls—the owner, with his hard eye, casting envious looks at them all the while, and thinking when they will have done. Venturing tenderly, page after page, expecting every moment when he shall interpose his interdict, and yet unable to deny themselves the gratification, they 'snatch a fearful joy'. Martin B——, in this way, by daily fragments, got through two volumes of Clarissa, when the stall-keeper damped his laudable ambition, by asking him (it was in his younger days) whether he meant to purchase the work. M. declares that under no circumstances of his life did he ever peruse a book with half the satisfaction which he took in those uneasy snatches. A quaint poetess of our day has moralised upon this subject in two very touching but homely stanzas

[2] I saw a boy with eager eye
Open a book upon a stall,
And read, as he'd devour it all;
Which when the stall-man did espy,
Soon to the boy I heard him call,
'You, Sir, you never buy a book,
Therefore in one you shall not look.'
The boy pass'd slowly on and with a sigh
He wish'd he never had been taught to read,
Then of the old churl's books he should have had no need.

Of sufferings the poor have many,
Which never can the rich annoy:
I soon perceiv'd another boy,
Who look'd as if he'd not had any
Food, for that day at least—enjoy
The sight of cold meat in a tavern larder.
This boy's case, then thought I, is surely harder,
Thus hungry, longing, thus without a penny,
Beholding choice of dainty-dressed meat:
No wonder if he wish he ne'er had learn'd to eat.

[1] *For a paragraph in the* L. M., *here omitted, see Editor's Notes* [2] *In the* L.M. *these lines are headed* THE TWO BOYS. [3] *In the* L. M., *below these lines come the words:* (To be continued.)

THE OLD MARGATE HOY

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I AM fond of passing my vacations (I believe I have said so before) at one or other of the Universities. Next to these my choice would fix me at some woody spot, such as the neighbourhood of Henley affords in abundance, upon the banks of my beloved Thames. But somehow or other my cousin contrives to wheedle me once in three or four seasons to a watering place. Old attachments cling to me in spite of experience. We have been dull at Worthing one summer, duller at Brighton another, dullest at Eastbourn a third, and are at this moment doing dreary penance at—Hastings !—and all because we were happy many years ago for a brief week at—Margate. That was our first sea-side experiment, and many circumstances combined to make it the most agreeable holyday of my life. We had neither of us seen the sea, and we had never been from home so long together in company.

Can I forget thee, thou old Margate Hoy, with thy weather-beaten, sun-burnt captain, and his rough accommodations—ill exchanged for the foppery and fresh-water niceness of the modern steam-packet ? To the winds and waves thou committedst thy goodly freightage, and didst ask no aid of magic fumes, and spells, and boiling cauldrons. With the gales of heaven thou wentest swimmingly ; or, when it was their pleasure, stoodest still with sailor-like patience. Thy course was natural, not forced, as in a hot-bed ; nor didst thou go poisoning the breath of ocean with sulphureous smoke—a great sea-chimæra, chimneying and furnacing the deep ; or liker to that [1]fire-god parching up Scamander.

Can I forget thy honest, yet slender crew, with their coy reluctant responses (yet to the suppression of anything like contempt) to the raw questions, which we of the great city would be ever and anon putting to them, as to the uses of this or that strange naval implement ? 'Specially can I forget thee, thou happy medium, thou shade of refuge

[1] fire-] sea- 1823.

between us and them, conciliating interpreter of their skill to our simplicity, comfortable ambassador between sea and land!—whose sailor-trowsers did not more convincingly assure thee to be an adopted denizen of the former, than thy white cap, and whiter apron over them, with thy neat-fingered practice in thy culinary vocation, bespoke thee to have been of inland nurture heretofore—a master cook of Eastcheap ? How busily didst thou ply thy multifarious occupation, cook, mariner, attendant, chamberlain ; here, there, like another Ariel, flaming at once about all parts of the deck, yet with kindlier ministrations—not to assist the tempest, but, as if touched with a kindred sense of our infirmities, to soothe the qualms which that untried motion might haply raise in our crude land-fancies. And when the o'er-washing billows drove us below deck (for it was far gone in October, and we had stiff and blowing weather, how did thy officious ministerings, still catering for out comfort, with cards, and cordials, and thy more cordial conversation, alleviate the closeness and the confinement of thy else (truth to say) not very savoury, nor very inviting, little cabin !

With these additaments to boot, we had on board a fellow-passenger, whose discourse in verity might have beguiled a longer voyage than we meditated, and have made mirth and wonder abound as far [1]as the Azores. He was a dark, Spanish complexioned young man, remarkably handsome, with an officer-like assurance, and an insuppressible volubility of assertion. He was, in fact, the greatest liar I had met with then, or since. He was none of your hesitating, half story-tellers (a most painful description of mortals) who go on sounding your belief, and only giving you as much as they can see you can swallow at a time—the nibbling pickpockets of your patience—but one who committed downright, day-light depredations upon his neighbour's faith. He did not stand shivering upon the brink, but was a hearty thorough-paced liar, and plunged at once into the depths of your credulity. I partly believe, he made pretty sure of his company. Not many rich, not many wise, or learned, composed at that time the common stowage of a Margate packet. We were, I am afraid, a set

[1] as the] as from Thames to the 1823.

of as [1]unseasoned Londoners (let our enemies give it a worse name) as [2]Aldermanbury, or Watling-street, at that time of day could have supplied. There might be an exception or two among us, but I scorn to make any invidious distinctions among such a jolly, companionable ship's company, as those were whom I sailed with. Something too must be conceded to the *Genius Loci*. Had the confident fellow told us half the legends on land, which he favoured us with on the other element, I flatter myself the good sense of most of us would have revolted. But we were in a new world, with everything unfamiliar about us, and the time and place disposed us to the reception of any prodigious marvel whatsoever. Time has obliterated from my memory much of his wild fablings; and the rest would appear but dull, as written, and to be read on shore. He had been Aid-de-camp (among other rare accidents and fortunes) to a Persian prince, and at one blow had stricken off the head of the King of Carimania on horseback. He, of course, married the Prince's daughter. I forget what unlucky turn in the politics of that court, combining with the loss of his consort, was the reason of his quitting Persia; but with the rapidity of a magician he transported himself, along with his hearers, back to England, where we still found him in the confidence of great ladies. There was some story of a Princess—Elizabeth, if I remember—having intrusted to his care an extraordinary casket of jewels, upon some extraordinary occasion—but as I am not certain of the name or circumstance at this distance of time, I must leave it to the royal daughters of England to settle the honour among themselves in private. I cannot call to mind half his pleasant wonders; but I perfectly remember, that in the course of his travels he had seen a phœnix; and he obligingly undeceived us of the vulgar error, that there is but one of that species at a time, assuring us that they were not uncommon in some parts of Upper Egypt. Hitherto he had found the most implicit listeners. His dreaming fancies had transported us beyond the 'ignorant present'. But when (still hardying more and more in his triumphs over our simplicity) he went on to affirm that he had

[1] unseasoned] unfledged 1823. [2] Aldermanbury, or Watling-street] Thames or Tooley-street 1823.

actually sailed through the legs of the Colossus at Rhodes, it really became necessary to make a stand. And here I must do justice to the good sense and intrepidity of one of our party, a youth, that had hitherto been one of his most deferential auditors, who, from his recent reading, made bold to assure the gentleman, that there must be some mistake, as 'the Colossus in question had been destroyed long since': to whose opinion, delivered with all modesty, our hero was obliging enough to concede thus much, that 'the figure was indeed a little damaged'. This was the only opposition he met with, and it did not at all seem to stagger him, for he proceeded with his fables, which the same youth appeared to swallow with still more complacency than ever,—confirmed, as it were, by the extreme candour of that concession. With these prodigies he wheedled us on till we came in sight of the Reculvers, which one of our own company (having been the voyage before) immediately recognising, and pointing out to us, was considered by us as no ordinary seaman.

All this time sat upon the edge of the deck quite a different character. It was a lad, apparently very poor, very infirm, and very patient. His eye was ever on the sea, with a smile: and, if he caught now and then some snatches of these wild legends, it was by accident, and they seemed not to concern him. The waves to him whispered more pleasant stories. He was as one, being with us, but not of us. He heard the bell of dinner ring without stirring; and when some of us pulled out our private stores—our cold meat and our salads—he produced none, and seemed to want none. Only a solitary biscuit he had laid in; provision for the one or two days and nights, to which these vessels then were oftentimes obliged to prolong their voyage. Upon a nearer acquaintance with him, which he seemed neither to court nor decline, we learned that he was going to Margate, with the hope of being admitted into the Infirmary there for sea-bathing. His disease was a scrofula, which appeared to have eaten all over him. He expressed great hopes of a cure; and when we asked him, whether he had any friends where he was going, he replied, 'he *had* no friends.'

These pleasant, and some mournful passages, with the first sight of the sea, co-operating with youth, and a sense

of holydays, and out-of-door adventure, to me that had been pent up in populous cities for many months before,—have left upon my mind the fragrance as of summer days gone by, bequeathing nothing but their remembrance for cold and wintry hours to chew upon.

Will it be thought a digression (it may spare some unwelcome comparisons), if I endeavour to account for the *dissatisfaction* which I have heard so many persons confess to have felt (as I did myself feel in part on this occasion), *at the sight of the sea for the first time?* I think the reason usually given—referring to the incapacity of actual objects for satisfying our preconceptions of them—scarcely goes deep enough into the question. Let the same person see a lion, an elephant, a mountain, for the first time in his life, and he shall perhaps feel himself a little mortified. The things do not fill up that space, which the idea of them seemed to take up in his mind. But they have still a correspondency to his first notion, and in time grow up to it, so as to produce a very similar impression: enlarging themselves (if I may say so) upon familiarity. But the sea remains a disappointment.—Is it not, that in *the latter* we had expected to behold (absurdly, I grant, but, I am afraid, by the law of imagination unavoidably) not a definite object, as those wild beasts, or that mountain compassable by the eye, but *all the sea at once*, THE COMMENSURATE ANTAGONIST OF THE EARTH! I do not say we tell ourselves so much, but the craving of the mind is to be satisfied with nothing less. I will suppose the case of a young person of fifteen (as I then was) knowing nothing of the sea, but from description. He comes to it for the first time—all that he has been reading of it all his life, and *that* the most enthusiastic part of life,—all he has gathered from narratives of wandering seamen; what he has gained from true voyages, and what he cherishes as credulously from romance and poetry; crowding their images, and exacting strange tributes from expectation.—He thinks of the great deep, and of those who go down into it; of its thousand isles, and of the vast continents it washes; of its receiving the mighty Plata, or Orellana, into its bosom, without disturbance, or sense of augmentation; of Biscay swells, and the mariner

> For many a day, and many a dreadful night,
> Incessant labouring round the stormy Cape;

of fatal rocks, and the 'still-vexed Bermoothes'; of great whirlpools, and the water-spout; of sunken ships, and sumless treasures swallowed up in the unrestoring depths: of fishes and quaint monsters, to which all that is terrible on earth—

> Be but as buggs to frighten babes withal,
> Compared with the creatures in the sea's entral;

of naked savages, and Juan Fernandez; of pearls, and shells; of coral beds, and of enchanted isles; of mermaids' grots—

I do not assert that in sober earnest he expects to be shown all these wonders at once, but he is under the tyranny of a mighty faculty, which haunts him with confused hints and shadows of all these; and when the actual object opens first upon him, seen (in tame weather too most likely) from our unromantic coasts—a speck, a slip of sea-water as it shows to him—what can it prove but a very unsatisfying and even diminutive entertainment? Or if he has come to it from the mouth of a river, was it much more than the river widening? and, even out of sight of land, what had he but a flat watery horizon about him, nothing comparable to the vast o'er-curtaining sky, his familiar object, seen daily without dread or amazement?—Who, in similar circumstances, has not been tempted to exclaim with Charoba, in the poem of Gebir,—

> Is this the mighty ocean?—is this *all?*

I love town, or country; but this detestable Cinque Port is neither. I hate these scrubbed shoots, thrusting out their starved foliage from between the horrid fissures of dusty innutritious rocks; which the amateur calls 'verdure to the edge of the sea'. I require woods, and they show me stunted coppices. I cry out for the water-brooks, and pant for fresh streams, and inland murmurs. I cannot stand all day on the naked beach, watching the capricious hues of the sea, shifting like the colours of a dying mullet. I am tired of looking out at the windows of this island-prison. I would fain retire into the interior of my cage. While I gaze upon the sea, I want to be on it, over it, across

it. It binds me in with chains, as of iron. My thoughts are abroad. I should not so feel in Staffordshire. There is no home for me here. There is no sense of home at Hastings. It is a place of fugitive resort, an heterogeneous assemblage of sea-mews and stock-brokers, Amphitrites of the town, and misses that coquet with the Ocean. If it were what it was in its primitive shape, and what it ought to have remained, a fair honest fishing town, and no more, it were something—with a few straggling fishermen's huts scattered about, artless as its cliffs, and with their materials filched from them, it were something. I could abide to dwell with Meschek; to assort with fisher-swains, and smugglers. There are, or I dream there are, many of this latter occupation here. Their faces become the place. I like a smuggler. He is the only honest thief. He robs nothing but the revenue,—an abstraction I never greatly cared about. I could go out with them in their mackarel boats, or about their less ostensible business, with some satisfaction. I can even tolerate those poor victims to monotony, who from day to day pace along the beach, in endless progress and recurrence, to watch their illicit countrymen—townsfolk or brethren perchance—whistling to the sheathing and unsheathing of their cutlasses (their only solace), who under the mild name of preventive service, keep up a legitimated civil warfare in the deplorable absence of a foreign one, to show their detestation of run hollands, and zeal for old England. But it is the visitants from town, that come here to *say* that they have been here, with no more relish of the sea than a pond perch, or a dace might be supposed to have, that are my aversion. I feel like a foolish dace in these regions, and have as little toleration for myself here, as for them. What can they want here? if they had a true relish of the ocean, why have they brought all this land luggage with them? or why pitch their civilised tents in the desert? What mean these scanty book-rooms—marine libraries as they entitle them—if the sea were, as they would have us believe, a book 'to read strange matter in'? what are their foolish concert-rooms, if they come, as they would fain be thought to do, to listen to the music of the waves? All is false and hollow pretension. They come, because it is the fashion,

and to spoil the nature of the place. They are mostly, as I have said, stockbrokers; but I have watched the better sort of them—now and then, an honest citizen (of the old stamp), in the simplicity of his heart, shall bring down his wife and daughters, to taste the sea breezes. I always know the date of their arrival. It is easy to see it in their countenance. A day or two they go wandering on the shingles, picking up cockle-shells, and thinking them great things; but, in a poor week, imagination slackens: they begin to discover that cockles produce no pearls, and then—O then!—if I could interpret for the pretty creatures (I know they have not the courage to confess it themselves) how gladly would they exchange their sea-side rambles for a Sunday walk on the green-sward of their accustomed Twickenham meadows!

I would ask of one of these sea-charmed emigrants, who think they truly love the sea, with its wild usages, what would their feelings be, if some of the unsophisticated aborigines of this place, encouraged by their courteous questionings here, should venture, on the faith of such assured sympathy between them, to return the visit, and come up to see—London. I must imagine them with their fishing tackle on their back, as we carry our town necessaries. What a sensation would it cause in Lothbury? What vehement laughter would it not excite among

> The daughters of Cheapside, and wives of Lombard-street.

I am sure that no town-bred, or inland-born subjects, can feel their true and natural nourishment at these sea-places. Nature, where she does not mean us for mariners and vagabonds, bids us stay at home. The salt foam seems to nourish a spleen. I am not half so good-natured as by the milder waters of my natural river. I would exchange these sea-gulls for swans, and scud a swallow for ever about the banks of Thamesis.

THE CONVALESCENT

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A PRETTY severe fit of indisposition which, under the name of a nervous fever, has made a prisoner of me for some weeks past, and is but slowly leaving me, has reduced me to an incapacity of reflecting upon any topic foreign to itself. Expect no healthy conclusions from me this month, reader; I can offer you only sick men's dreams.

And truly the whole state of sickness is such; for what else is it but a magnificent dream for a man to lie a-bed, and draw day-light curtains about him; and, shutting out the sun, to induce a total oblivion of all the works which are going on under it? To become insensible to all the operations of life, except the beatings of one feeble pulse?

If there be a regal solitude, it is a sick bed. How the patient lords it there! what caprices he acts without controul! how king-like he sways his pillow—tumbling, and tossing, and shifting, and lowering, and thumping, and flatting, and moulding it, to the ever varying requisitions of his throbbing temples.

He changes *sides* oftener than a politician. Now he lies full length, then half-length, obliquely, transversely, head and feet quite across the bed; and none accuses him of tergiversation. Within the four curtains he is absolute. They are his Mare Clausum.

How sickness enlarges the dimensions of a man's self to himself! he is his own exclusive object. Supreme selfishness is inculcated upon him as his only duty. 'Tis the Two Tables of the Law to him. He has nothing to think of but how to get well. What passes out of doors, or within them, so he hear not the jarring of them, affects him not.

A little while ago he was greatly concerned in the event of a law-suit, which was to be the making or the marring of his dearest friend. He was to be seen trudging about upon this man's errand to fifty quarters of the town at

once, jogging this witness, refreshing that solicitor. The cause was to come on yesterday. He is absolutely as indifferent to the decision, as if it were a question to be tried at Pekin. Peradventure from some whispering, going on about the house, not intended for his hearing, he picks up enough to make him understand, that things went cross-grained in the Court yesterday, and his friend is ruined. But the word 'friend', and the word 'ruin', disturb him no more than so much jargon. He is not to think of anything but how to get better.

What a world of foreign cares are merged in that absorbing consideration!

He has put on the strong armour of sickness, he is wrapped in the callous hide of suffering; he keeps his sympathy, like some curious vintage, under trusty lock and key, for his own use only.

He lies pitying himself, honing and moaning to himself; he yearneth over himself; his bowels are even melted within him, to think what he suffers; he is not ashamed to weep over himself.

He is for ever plotting how to do some good to himself; studying little stratagems and artificial alleviations.

He makes the most of himself; dividing himself, by an allowable fiction, into as many distinct individuals, as he hath sore and sorrowing members. Sometimes he meditates—as of a thing apart from him—upon his poor aching head, and that dull pain which, dozing or waking, lay in it all the past night like a log, or palpable substance of pain, not to be removed without opening the very scull, as it seemed, to take it thence. Or he pities his long, clammy, attenuated fingers. He compassionates himself all over; and his bed is a very discipline of humanity, and tender heart.

He is his own sympathiser; and instinctively feels that none can so well perform that office for him. He cares for few spectators to his tragedy. Only that punctual face of the old nurse pleases him, that announces his broths, and his cordials. He likes it because it is so unmoved, and because he can pour forth his feverish ejaculations before it as unreservedly as to his bed-post.

To the world's business he is dead. He understands

not what the callings and occupations of mortals are ; only he has a glimmering conceit of some such thing, when the doctor makes his daily call : and even in the lines of that busy face he reads no multiplicity of patients, but solely conceives of himself as *the sick man*. To what other uneasy couch the good man is hastening, when he slips out of his chamber, folding up his thin douceur so carefully for fear of rustling—is no speculation which he can at present entertain. He thinks only of the regular return of the same phenomenon at the same hour to-morrow.

Household rumours touch him not. Some faint murmur, indicative of life going on within the house, soothes him, while he knows not distinctly what it is. He is not to know any thing, not to think of any thing. Servants gliding up or down the distant staircase, treading as upon velvet, gently keep his ear awake, so long as he troubles not himself further than with some feeble guess at their errands.

Exacter knowledge would be a burthen to him : he can just endure the pressure of conjecture. He opens his eye faintly at the dull stroke of the muffled knocker, and closes it again without asking 'who was it?' He is flattered by a general notion that inquiries are making after him, but he cares not to know the name of the inquirer. In the general stillness, and awful hush of the house, he lies in state, and feels his sovereignty.

To be sick is to enjoy monarchal prerogatives. Compare the silent tread, and quiet ministry, almost by the eye only, with which he is served—with the careless demeanour, the unceremonious goings in and out (slapping of doors, or [1]leaving them open) of the very same attendants, when he is getting a little better—and you will confess, that from the bed of sickness (throne let me rather call it) to the elbow chair of convalescence, is a fall from dignity, amounting to a deposition.

How convalescence shrinks a man back to his pristine stature ! where is now the space, which he occupied so lately, in his own, in the family's eye ? The scene of his regalities, his sick room, which was his presence chamber, where he lay and acted his despotic fancies—how is it reduced to a common bed-room ! The trimness of the very

[1] leaving] leaving of 1825.

bed has something petty and unmeaning about it. It is *made* every day. How unlike to that wavy, many-furrowed, oceanic surface, which it presented so short a time since, when to *make* it was a service not to be thought of at oftener than three or four day revolutions, when the patient was with pain and grief to be lifted for a little while out of it, to submit to the encroachments of unwelcome neatness, and decencies which his shaken frame deprecated; then to be lifted into it again, for another three or four days' respite, to flounder it out of shape again, while every fresh furrow was a historical record of some shifting posture, some uneasy turning, some seeking for a little ease; and the shrunken skin scarce told a truer story than the crumpled coverlid.

Hushed are those mysterious sighs—those groans—so much more awful, while we knew not from what caverns of vast hidden suffering they proceeded. The Lernean pangs are quenched. The riddle of sickness is solved; and Philoctetes is become an ordinary personage.

Perhaps some relic of the sick man's dream of greatness survives in the still lingering visitations of the medical attendant. But how is he too changed with every thing else! Can this be he—this man of news—of chat—of anecdote—of every thing but physic—can this be he, who so lately came between the patient and his cruel enemy, as on some solemn embassy from Nature, erecting herself into a high mediating party?—Pshaw! 'tis some old woman.

Farewell with him all that made sickness pompous—the spell that hushed the household—the desart-like stillness, felt throughout its inmost chambers—the mute attendance—the inquiry by looks—the still softer delicacies of self-attention—the sole and single eye of distemper alonely fixed upon itself—world-thoughts excluded—the man a world unto himself—his own theatre—

> What a speck is he dwindled into!

In this flat swamp of convalescence, left by the ebb of sickness, yet far enough from the terra firma of established health, your note, dear Editor, reached me, requesting—an article. In Articulo Mortis, thought I; but it is

something hard—and the quibble, wretched as it was, relieved me. The summons, unseasonable as it appeared, seemed to link me on again to the petty businesses of life, which I had lost sight of; a gentle call to activity, however trivial; a wholesome weaning from that preposterous dream of self-absorption—the puffy state of sickness—in which I confess to have lain so long, insensible to the magazines, and monarchies, of the world alike; to its laws, and to its literature. The hypochondriac flatus is subsiding; the acres, which in imagination I had spread over—for the sick man swells in the sole contemplation of his single sufferings, till he becomes a Tityus to himself—are wasting to a span; and for the giant of self-importance, which I was so lately, you have me once again in my natural pretensions—the lean and meagre figure of your insignificant [1]Essayist.

SANITY OF TRUE GENIUS

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[2]So far from the position holding true, that great wit (or genius, in our modern way of speaking), has a necessary alliance with insanity, the greatest wits, on the contrary, will ever be found to be the sanest writers. It is impossible for the mind to conceive of a mad Shakspeare. The greatness of wit, by which the poetic talent is here chiefly to be understood, manifests itself in the admirable balance of all the faculties. Madness is the disproportionate straining or excess of any one of them. 'So strong a wit', says Cowley, speaking of a poetical friend,

> '——did Nature to him frame,
> As all things but his judgment overcame,
> His judgment like the heavenly moon did show,
> Tempering that mighty sea below.'

The ground of the [3]mistake is, that men, finding in the

[1] Essayist] contributor 1825. [2] So far . . . will ever] So far from this being true, the greatest wits will ever 1826. [3] mistake] fallacy 1826.

raptures of the higher poetry a condition of exaltation, to which they have no parallel in their own experience, besides the spurious resemblance of it in dreams and fevers, impute a state of dreaminess and fever to the poet. But the true poet dreams being awake. He is not possessed by his subject, but has dominion over it. In the groves of Eden he walks familiar as in his native paths. He ascends the empyrean heaven, and is not intoxicated. He treads the burning marl without dismay; he wins his flight without self-loss through realms of chaos 'and old night'. Or if, abandoning himself to that severer chaos of a 'human mind untuned', he is content awhile to be mad with Lear, or to hate mankind (a sort of madness) with Timon, neither is that madness, nor this misanthropy, so unchecked, but that,—never letting the reins of reason wholly go, while most he seems to do so,—he has his better genius still whispering at his ear, with the good servant Kent suggesting saner counsels, or with the honest steward Flavius recommending kindlier resolutions. Where he seems most to recede from humanity, he will be found the truest to it. From beyond the scope of Nature if he summon possible existences, he subjugates them to the law of her consistency. He is beautifully loyal to that sovereign directress, even when he appears most to betray and desert her. His ideal tribes submit to policy; his very monsters are tamed to his hand, even as that wild sea-brood, shepherded by Proteus. He tames, and he clothes them with attributes of flesh and blood, till they wonder at themselves, like Indian Islanders forced to submit to European vesture. Caliban, the Witches, are as true to the laws of their own nature (ours with a difference), as Othello, Hamlet, and Macbeth. Herein the great and the little wits are differenced; that if the latter wander ever so little from nature or actual existence, they lose themselves, and their readers. Their phantoms are lawless; their visions nightmares. They do not create, which implies shaping and consistency. Their imaginations are not active—for to be active is to call something into act and form—but passive, as men in sick dreams. For the super-natural, or something superadded to what we know of nature, they give you the plainly non-natural. And if this were all, and that these mental

hallucinations were discoverable only in the treatment of subjects out of nature, or transcending it, the judgment might with some plea be pardoned if it ran riot, and a little wantonized: but even in the describing of real and every day life, that which is before their eyes, one of these lesser wits shall more deviate from nature—show more of that inconsequence, which has a natural alliance with frenzy,—than a great genius in his 'maddest fits', as Withers somewhere calls them. We appeal to any one that is acquainted with the common run of Lane's novels,—as they existed some twenty or thirty years back,—those scanty intellectual viands of the whole female reading public, till a happier genius arose, and expelled for ever the innutritious phantoms,—whether he has not found his brain more 'betossed', his memory more puzzled, his sense of when and where more confounded, among the improbable events, the incoherent incidents, the inconsistent characters, or no-characters, of some third-rate love intrigue—where the persons shall be a Lord Glendamour and a Miss Rivers, and the scene only alternate between Bath and Bond-street—a more bewildering dreaminess induced upon him, than he has felt wandering over all the fairy grounds of Spenser. In the productions we refer to, nothing but names and places is familiar; the persons are neither of this world nor of any other conceivable one; an endless string of activities without purpose, of purposes destitute of motive:—we meet phantoms in our known walks; *fantasques* only christened. In the poet we have names which announce fiction; and we have absolutely no place at all, for the things and persons of the Fairy Queen prate not of their 'whereabout'. But in their inner nature, and the law of their speech and actions, we are at home and upon acquainted ground. The one turns life into a dream; the other to the wildest dreams gives the sobrieties of every day occurrences. By what subtile art of tracing the mental processes it is effected, we are not philosophers enough to explain, but in that wonderful episode of the cave of Mammon, in which the Money God appears first in the lowest form of a miser, is then a worker of metals, and becomes the god of all the treasures of the world; and has a daughter, Ambition, before whom all

the world kneels for favours—with the Hesperian fruit, the waters of Tantalus, with Pilate washing his hands vainly, but not impertinently, in the same stream—that we should be at one moment in the cave of an old hoarder of treasures, at the next at the forge of the Cyclops, in a palace and yet in hell, all at once, with the shifting mutations of the most rambling dream, and our judgment yet all the time awake, and neither able nor willing to detect the fallacy,—is a proof of that hidden sanity which still guides the poet in his widest seeming-aberrations.

It is not enough to say that the whole episode is a copy of the mind's conceptions in sleep; it is, in some sort—but what a copy! Let the most romantic of us, that has been entertained all night with the spectacle of some wild and magnificent vision, recombine it in the morning, and try it by his waking judgment. That which appeared so shifting, and yet so coherent, while that faculty was passive, when it comes under cool examination, shall appear so reasonless and so unlinked, that we are ashamed to have been so deluded; and to have taken, though but in sleep, a monster for a god. But the transitions in this episode are every whit as violent as in the most extravagant dream, and yet the waking judgment ratifies them.

CAPTAIN JACKSON

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. x, no. lix, p. 481 (Nov., 1824). Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

Among the deaths in our obituary for this month, I observe with concern 'At his cottage on the Bath road, Captain Jackson'. The name and attribution are common enough; but a feeling like reproach persuades me, that this could have been no other in fact than my dear old friend, who some five-and-twenty years ago rented a tenement, which he was pleased to dignify with the appellation here used, about a mile from Westbourn Green. Alack, how good men, and the good turns they do us, slide out of memory, and are recalled but by the surprise of

some such sad memento as that which now lies before [1]us !

He whom I mean was a retired half-pay officer, with a wife and two grown-up daughters, whom he maintained with the port and notions of gentlewomen upon that slender professional allowance. Comely girls they were too.

And was I in danger of forgetting this man ?—his cheerful suppers—the noble tone of hospitality, when first you set your foot in *the cottage*—the anxious ministerings about you, where little or nothing (God knows) was to be ministered.—Althea's horn in a poor platter—the power of self-enchantment, by which, in his magnificent wishes to entertain you, he multiplied his means to bounties.

You saw with your bodily eyes indeed what seemed a bare scrag—cold savings from the foregone meal—remnant hardly sufficient to send a mendicant from the door contented. But in the copious will—the revelling imagination of your host—the 'mind, the mind, Master Shallow', whole beeves were spread before you—hecatombs —no end appeared to the profusion.

It was the widow's cruse—the loaves and fishes ; carving could not lessen nor helping diminish it—the stamina were left—the elemental bone still flourished, divested of its accidents.

'Let us live while we can,' methinks I hear the open-handed creature exclaim ; 'while we have, let us not want,' 'here is plenty left ;' 'want for nothing'—with many more such hospitable sayings, the spurs of appetite, and old concomitants of smoaking boards, and feast-oppressed chargers. Then sliding a slender ratio of Single Gloucester upon his wife's plate, or the daughter's, he would convey the remanent rind into his own, with a merry quirk of 'the nearer the bone', &c., and declaring that he universally preferred the outside. For we had our table distinctions, you are to know, and some of us in a manner sate above the salt. None but his guest or guests dreamed of tasting flesh luxuries at night, the fragments were *verè hospitibus sacra*. But of one thing or another there was

[1] us] me 1824.

always enough, and leavings: only he would sometimes finish the remainder crust, to show that he wished no savings.

Wine he had none; nor, except on very rare occasions, spirits; but the sensation of wine was there. Some thin kind of ale I remember—'British beverage,' he would say! 'Push about, my boys;' 'Drink to your sweethearts, girls.' At every meagre draught a toast must ensue, or a song. All the forms of good liquor were there, with none of the effects wanting. Shut your eyes, and you would swear a capacious bowl of punch was foaming in the centre, with beams of generous Port or Madeira radiating to it from each of the table corners. You got flustered, without knowing whence; tipsy upon words; and reeled under the potency of his unperforming Bacchanalian encouragements.

We had our songs—'Why, Soldiers, Why'—and the 'British Grenadiers'—in which last we were all obliged to bear chorus. Both the daughters sang. Their proficiency was a nightly theme—the masters he had given them—the 'no-expence' which he spared to accomplish them in a science 'so necessary to young women'. But then—they could not sing 'without the instrument'.

Sacred, and by me, never-to-be violated, Secrets of Poverty! Should I disclose your honest aims at grandeur, your makeshift efforts of magnificence? Sleep, sleep, with all thy broken keys, if one of the bunch be extant; thrummed by a thousand ancestral thumbs; dear, cracked spinnet of dearer Louisa! Without mention of mine, be dumb, thou thin accompanier of her thinner warble! A veil be spread over the dear delighted face of the well-deluded father, who now haply listening to cherubic notes, scarce feels sincerer pleasure than when she awakened thy time-shaken chords responsive to the twitterings of that slender image of a voice.

We were not without our literary talk either. It did not extend far, but as far as it went, it was good. It was bottomed well; had good grounds to go upon. In *the cottage* was a room, which tradition authenticated to have been the same in which Glover, in his occasional retirements, had penned the greater part of his Leonidas. This

circumstance was nightly quoted, though none of the present inmates, that I could discover, appeared ever to have met with the poem in question. But that was no matter. Glover had written there, and the anecdote was pressed into the account of the family importance. It diffused a learned air through the apartment, the little side casement of which (the poet's study window), opening upon a superb view as far as to the pretty spire of Harrow, over domains and patrimonial acres, not a rood nor square yard whereof our host could call his own, yet gave occasion to an immoderate expansion of—vanity shall I call it ?—in his bosom, as he showed them in a glowing summer evening. It was all his, he took it all in, and communicated rich portions of it to his guests. It was a part of his largess, his hospitality; it was going over his grounds; he was lord for the time of showing them, and you the implicit lookers-up to his magnificence.

He was a juggler, who threw mists before your eyes—you had no time to detect his fallacies. He would say 'hand me the *silver* sugar tongs'; and, before you could discover it was a single spoon, and that *plated*, he would disturb and captivate your imagination by a misnomer of 'the urn' for a tea kettle; or by calling a homely bench a sofa. Rich men direct you to their furniture, poor ones divert you from it; he neither did one nor the other, but by simply assuming that everything was handsome about him, you were positively at a demur what you did, or did not see, at *the cottage*. With nothing to live on, he seemed to live on everything. He had a stock of wealth in his mind; not that which is properly termed *Content*, for in truth he was not to be *contained* at all, but overflowed all bounds by the force of a magnificent self-delusion.

Enthusiasm is catching; and even his wife, a sober native of North Britain, who generally saw things more as they were, was not proof against the continual collision of his credulity. Her daughters were rational and discreet young women; in the main, perhaps, not insensible to their true circumstances. I have seen them assume a thoughtful air at times. But such was the preponderating opulence of his fancy, that I am persuaded, not for any half hour together, did they ever look their own prospects

fairly in the face. There was no resisting the vortex of his temperament. His riotous imagination conjured up handsome settlements before their eyes, which kept them up in the eye of the world too, and seem at last to have realised themselves; for they both have married since, I am told, more than respectably.

It is long since, and my memory waxes dim on some subjects, or I should wish to convey some notion of the manner in which the pleasant creature described the circumstances of his own wedding-day. I faintly remember something of a chaise and four, in which he made his entry into Glasgow on that morning to fetch the bride home, or carry her thither, I forget which. It so completely made out the stanza of the old ballad—

> When we came down through Glasgow town,
> We were a comely sight to see;
> My love was clad in black velvet,
> And I myself in cramasie.

I suppose it was the only occasion upon which his own actual splendour at all corresponded with the world's notions on that subject. In homely cart, or travelling caravan, by whatever humble vehicle they chanced to be transported in less prosperous days, the ride through Glasgow came back upon his fancy, not as a humiliating contrast, but as a fair occasion for reverting to that one day's state. It seemed an 'equipage etern' from which no power of fate or fortune, once mounted, had power thereafter to dislodge him.

There is some merit in putting a handsome face upon indigent circumstances. To bully and swagger away the sense of them before strangers, may be not always discommendable. Tibbs, and Bobadil, even when detected, have more of our admiration than contempt. But for a man to put the cheat upon himself; to play the Bobadil at home; and, steeped in poverty up to the lips, to fancy himself all the while chin-deep in riches, is a strain of constitutional philosophy, and a mastery over fortune, which was reserved for my old friend Captain Jackson.

THE SUPERANNUATED MAN

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Sera tamen respexit
Libertas. VIRGIL.

A Clerk I was in London gay.
O'KEEFE.

IF peradventure, Reader, it has been thy lot to waste the golden years of thy life—thy shining youth—in the irksome confinement of an office; to have thy prison days prolonged through middle age down to decrepitude and silver hairs, without hope of release or respite; to have lived to forget that there are such things as holidays, or to remember them but as the prerogatives of childhood; then, and then only, will you be able to appreciate my deliverance.

It is now six and thirty years since I took my seat at the desk in Mincing-lane. Melancholy was the transition at fourteen from the abundant play-time, and the frequently-intervening vacations of school days, to the eight, nine, and sometimes ten hours' a-day attendance at a counting-house. But time partially reconciles us to anything. I gradually became content—doggedly contented, as wild animals in cages.

It is true I had my Sundays to myself; but Sundays, admirable as the institution of them is for purposes of worship, are for that very reason the very worst adapted for days of unbending and [1]recreation. In particular, there is a gloom for me attendant upon a city Sunday, a weight in the air. I miss the cheerful cries of London, the music, and the ballad-singers—the buzz and stirring murmur of the streets. Those eternal bells depress me. The closed shops repel me. Prints, pictures, all the glittering and endless succession of knacks and gewgaws, and ostentatiously displayed wares of tradesmen, which make a week-day saunter through the less busy parts of the metropolis so delightful—are shut out. No book-stalls deliciously to idle over—No busy faces to recreate the

[1] *For a footnote here in the* L. M. *see Editor's Notes.*

idle man who contemplates them ever passing by—the very face of business a charm by contrast to his temporary relaxation from it. Nothing to be seen but unhappy countenances—or half-happy at best—of emancipated 'prentices and little tradesfolks, with here and there a servant maid that has got leave to go out, who, slaving all the week, with the habit has lost almost the capacity of enjoying a free hour ; and livelily expressing the hollowness of a day's pleasuring. The very strollers in the fields on that day look anything but comfortable.

But besides Sundays I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire. This last was a great indulgence ; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me ? or rather was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them ? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest ? Before I had a taste of it, it was vanished. I was at the desk again, counting upon the fifty-one tedious weeks that must intervene before such another snatch would come. Still the prospect of its coming threw something of an illumination upon the darker side of my captivity. Without it, as I have said, I could scarcely have sustained my thraldom.

Independently of the rigours of attendance, I have ever been haunted with a sense (perhaps a mere caprice) of incapacity for business. This, during my latter years, had increased to such a degree, that it was visible in all the lines of my countenance. My health and my good spirits flagged. I had perpetually a dread of some crisis, to which I should be found unequal. Besides my daylight servitude, I served over again all night in my sleep, and would awake with terrors of imaginary false entries, errors in my accounts, and the like. I was fifty years of age, and no prospect of emancipation presented itself. I had grown to my desk, as it were ; and the wood had entered into my soul.

My fellows in the office would sometimes rally me upon

the trouble legible in my countenance; but I did not know that it had raised the suspicions of any of my employers, when, on the 5th of last month, a day ever to be remembered by me, L——, the junior partner in the firm, calling me on one side, directly taxed me with my bad looks, and frankly inquired the cause of them. So taxed, I honestly made confession of my infirmity, and added that I was afraid I should eventually be obliged to resign his service. He spoke some words of course to hearten me, and there the matter rested. A whole week I remained labouring under the impression that I had acted imprudently in my disclosure; that I had foolishly given a handle against myself, and had been anticipating my own dismissal. A week passed in this manner, the most anxious one, I verily believe, in my whole life, when on the evening of the 12th of April, just as I was about quitting my desk to go home (it might be about eight o'clock) I received an awful summons to attend the presence of the whole assembled firm in the formidable back parlour. I thought, now my time is surely come, I have done for myself, I am going to be told that they have no longer occasion for me. L——, I could see, smiled at the terror I was in, which was a little relief to me,—when to my utter astonishment B——, the eldest partner, began a formal harangue to me on the length of my services, my very meritorious conduct during the whole of the time (the deuce, thought I, how did he find out that? I protest I never had the confidence to think as much). He went on to descant on the expediency of retiring at a certain time of life (how my heart panted!) and asking me a few questions as to the amount of my own property, of which I have a little, ended with a proposal, to which his three partners nodded a grave assent, that I should accept from the house, which I had served so well, a pension for life to the amount of two-thirds of my accustomed salary—a magnificent offer! I do not know what I answered between surprise and gratitude, but it was understood that I accepted their proposal, and I was told that I was free from that hour to leave their service. I stammered out a bow, and at just ten minutes after eight I went home—for ever. This noble benefit—gratitude forbids me to conceal their names

—I owe to the kindness of the most munificent firm in the world—the house of Boldero, Merryweather, Bosanquet and Lacy.

Esto perpetua !

For the first day or two I felt stunned, overwhelmed. I could only apprehend my felicity ; I was too confused to taste it sincerely. I wandered about, thinking I was happy, and knowing that I was not. I was in the condition of a prisoner in the old Bastile, suddenly let loose after a forty years' confinement. I could scarce trust myself with myself. It was like passing out of Time into Eternity—for it is a sort of Eternity for a man to have his Time all to himself. It seemed to me that I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage. From a poor man, poor in Time, I was suddenly lifted up into a vast revenue ; I could see no end of my possessions ; I wanted some steward, or judicious bailiff, to manage my estates in Time for me. And here let me caution persons grown old in active business, not lightly, nor without weighing their own resources, to forego their customary employment all at once, for there may be danger in it. I feel it by myself, but I know that my resources are sufficient ; and now that those first giddy raptures have subsided, I have a quiet home-feeling of the blessedness of my condition. I am in no hurry. Having all holidays, I am as though I had none. If Time hung heavy upon me, I could walk it away ; but I do *not* walk all day long, as I used to do in those old transient holidays, thirty miles a day, to make the most of them. If Time were troublesome, I could read it away, but I do *not* read in that violent measure, with which, having no Time my own but candle-light Time, I used to weary out my head and eyesight in by-gone winters. I walk, read or scribble (as now) just when the fit seizes me. I no longer hunt after pleasure ; I let it come to me. I am like the man

> ———That's born, and has his years come to him,
> In some green desart.

'Years,' you will say ! 'what is this superannuated simpleton calculating upon ? He has already told us, he is past fifty.'

I have indeed lived nominally fifty years, but deduct out of them the hours which I have lived to other people, and not to myself, and you will find me still a young fellow. For *that* is the only true Time, which a man can properly call his own, that which he has all to himself; the rest, though in some sense he may be said to live it, is other people's time, not his. The remnant of my poor days, long or short, is at least multiplied for me three-fold. My ten next years, if I stretch so far, will be as long as any preceding thirty. 'Tis a fair rule-of-three sum.

Among the strange fantasies which beset me at the commencement of my freedom, and of which all traces are not yet gone, one was, that a vast tract of time had intervened since I quitted the Counting House. I could not conceive of it as an affair of yesterday. The partners, and the clerks, with whom I had for so many years, and for so many hours in each day of the year, been closely associated—being suddenly removed from them—they seemed as dead to me. There is a fine passage, which may serve to illustrate this fancy, in a Tragedy by Sir Robert Howard, speaking of a friend's death:

> ———'Twas but just now he went away;
> I have not since had time to shed a tear;
> And yet the distance does the same appear
> As if he had been a thousand years from me.
> Time takes no measure in Eternity.

To dissipate this awkward feeling, I have been fain to go among them once or twice since; to visit my old desk-fellows—my co-brethren of the quill—that I had left below in the state militant. Not all the kindness with which they received me could quite restore to me that pleasant familiarity, which I had heretofore enjoyed among them. We cracked some of our old jokes, but methought they went off but faintly. My old desk; the peg where I hung my hat, were appropriated to another. I knew it must be, but I could not take it kindly. D——l take me, if I did not feel some remorse—beast, if I had not,—at quitting my old compeers, the faithful partners of my toils for six and thirty years, that smoothed for me with their jokes [1]and conundrums the ruggedness of my professional

[1] and] and their 1825.

road. Had it been so rugged then after all? or was I a coward simply? Well, it is too late to repent; and I also know, that these suggestions are a common fallacy of the mind on such occasions. But my heart smote me. I had violently broken the bands betwixt us. It was at least not courteous. I shall be some time before I get quite reconciled to the separation. Farewell, old cronies, yet not for long, for again and again I will come among ye, if I shall have your leave. Farewell Ch——, dry, sarcastic, and friendly! Do——, mild, slow to move, and gentlemanly! Pl——, officious to do, and to volunteer, good services!—and thou, thou dreary pile, fit mansion for a Gresham or a Whittington of old, stately House of Merchants; with thy labyrinthine passages, and light-excluding, pent-up offices, where candles for one half the year supplied the place of the sun's light; unhealthy contributor to my weal, stern fosterer of my living, farewell! In thee remain, and not in the obscure collection of some wandering bookseller, my 'works!' There let them rest, as I do from my labours, piled on thy massy shelves, more MSS. in folio than ever Aquinas left, and full as useful! My mantle I bequeath among ye.

[1]A fortnight has passed since the date of my first communication. At that period I was approaching to tranquillity, but had not reached it. I boasted of a calm indeed, but it was comparative only. Something of the first flutter was left; an unsettling sense of novelty; the dazzle to weak eyes of unaccustomed light. I missed my old chains, forsooth, as if they had been some necessary part of my apparel. I was a poor Carthusian, from strict cellular discipline suddenly by some revolution returned upon the world. I am now as if I had never been other than my own master. It is natural to me to go where I please, to do what I please. I find myself at eleven o'clock in the day in Bond-street, and it seems to me that I have been sauntering there at that very hour for years past. I digress into Soho, to explore a book-stall. Methinks I have been thirty years a collector. There is nothing strange nor new in it. I find myself before a fine

[1] *Here, in the* L. M., *begins the second part, which is headed* No. II, *with the motto,* A clerk I was in London gay.—O'KEEFE, *below.*

picture in a morning. Was it ever otherwise ? What is become of Fish-street Hill ? Where is Fenchurch-street ? Stones of old Mincing-lane, which I have worn with my daily pilgrimage for six and thirty years, to the footsteps of what toil-worn clerk are your everlasting flints now vocal ? I indent the gayer flags of Pall Mall. It is Change time, and I am strangely among the Elgin marbles. It was no hyperbole when I ventured to compare the change in my condition to a passing into another world. Time stands still in a manner to me. I have lost all distinction of season. I do not know the day of the week, or of the month. Each day used to be individually felt by me in its reference to the foreign post days ; in its distance from, or propinquity to, the next Sunday. I had my Wednesday feelings, my Saturday nights' sensations. The genius of each day was upon me distinctly during the whole of it, affecting my appetite, spirits, &c. The phantom of the next day, with the dreary five to follow, sate as a load upon my poor Sabbath recreations. What charm has washed that Ethiop white ? What is gone of Black Monday ? All days are the same. Sunday itself —that unfortunate failure of a holyday as it too often proved, what with my sense of its fugitiveness, and overcare to get the greatest quantity of pleasure out of it—is melted down into a week day. I can spare to go to church now, without grudging the huge cantle which it used to seem to cut out of the holyday. I have Time for everything. I can visit a sick friend. I can interrupt the man of much occupation when he is busiest. I can insult over him with an invitation to take a day's pleasure with me to Windsor this fine May-morning. It is Lucretian pleasure to behold the poor drudges, whom I have left behind in the world, carking and caring ; like horses in a mill, drudging on in the same eternal round—and what is it all [1]for ? A man can never have too much Time to himself, nor too little to do. Had I a little son, I would christen him NOTHING-TO-DO ; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative. I am altogether for the life contemplative. Will no kindly

[1] *For a passage in the* L. M., *here omitted, see Editor's Notes.*

earthquake come and swallow up those accursed cotton mills? Take me that lumber of a desk there, and bowl it down

As low as to the fiends.

I am no longer [1]* * * * * *, clerk to the Firm of &c. I am Retired Leisure. I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace, nor with any settled purpose. I walk about; not to and from. They tell me, a certain *cum dignitate* air, that has been buried so long with my other good parts, has begun to shoot forth in my person. I grow into gentility perceptibly. When I take up a newspaper, it is to read the state of the opera. *Opus operatum est.* I have done all that I came into this world to do. I have worked task work, and have the rest of the day to [2]myself.

THE GENTEEL STYLE IN WRITING

[Printed under the title, *Popular Fallacies:* xiv.—*That my Lord Shaftesbury and Sir William Temple are models of the Genteel Style in Writing,* in *The New Monthly Magazine,* March, 1826, p. 259. Collected in *The Last Essay of Elia,* 1833. Text of 1833.]

[3]It is an ordinary criticism, that my Lord Shaftesbury, and Sir William Temple, are models of the genteel style in writing. We should prefer saying—of the lordly, [4]and the gentlemanly. Nothing can be more unlike than the inflated finical rhapsodies of Shaftesbury, and the plain natural chit-chat of Temple. The man of rank is discernible in both writers; but in the one it is only insinuated gracefully, in the other it stands out offensively. The peer seems to have written with his coronet on, and his Earl's mantle before him; the commoner in his elbow chair and undress.—What can be more pleasant than the way in which the retired statesman peeps out in the essays, penned by the latter in his delightful retreat at Shene? They scent of Nimeguen, and the Hague. Scarce an

[1] * * * * * *] J—s D—n 1825. [2] myself.] myself. | J. D. | Beaufort-terrace, Regent-street; | Late of Ironmonger's-court, Fenchurch-street. 1825. [3] It is . . . in writing. *omit* 1826. [4] and] and of 1826.

authority is quoted under an ambassador. Don Francisco de Melo, a 'Portugal Envoy in England', tells him it was frequent in his country for men, spent with age or other decays, so as they could not hope for above a year or two of life, to ship themselves away in a Brazil fleet, and after their arrival there to go on a great length, sometimes of twenty or thirty years, or more, by the force of that vigour they recovered with that remove. 'Whether such an effect (Temple beautifully adds) might grow from the air, or the fruits of that climate, or by approaching nearer the sun, which is the fountain of light and heat, when their natural heat was so far decayed: or whether the piecing out of an old man's life were worth the pains; I cannot tell: perhaps the play is not worth the candle.'—Monsieur Pompone, 'French Ambassador in his (Sir William's) time at the Hague,' certifies him, that in his life he had never heard of any man in France that arrived at a hundred years of age; a limitation of life which the old gentleman imputes to the excellence of their climate, giving them such a liveliness of temper and humour, as disposes them to more pleasures of all kinds than in other countries; and moralises upon the matter very sensibly. The 'late Robert Earl of Leicester' furnishes him with a story of a Countess of Desmond, married out of England in Edward the Fourth's time, and who lived far in King James's reign. The 'same noble person' gives him an account, how such a year, in the same reign, there went about the country a set of morrice-dancers, composed of ten men who danced, a Maid Marian, and a tabor and pipe; and how these twelve, one with another, made up twelve hundred years. 'It was not so much (says Temple) that so many in one small county (Herefordshire) should live to that age, as that they should be in vigour and in humour to travel and to dance.' Monsieur Zulichem, one of his 'colleagues at the Hague', informs him of a cure for the gout; which is confirmed by another 'Envoy', Monsieur Serinchamps in that town, who had tried it.—Old Prince Maurice of Nassau recommends to him the use of hammocks in that complaint; having been allured to sleep, while suffering under it himself, by the 'constant motion or swinging of those airy beds'. Count Egmont, and the Rainegrave

who ' was killed last summer before Maestricht ', impart to him their experiences.

But the rank of the writer is never more innocently disclosed, than where he takes for granted the compliments paid by foreigners to his fruit-trees. For the taste and perfection of what we esteem the best, he can truly say, that the French, who have eaten his peaches and grapes at Shene in no very ill year, have generally concluded that the last are as good as any they have eaten in France on this side Fontainebleau ; and the first as good as any they have eat in Gascony. Italians have agreed his white figs to be as good as any of that sort in Italy, which is the earlier kind of white fig there ; for in the later kind and the blue, we cannot come near the warm climates, no more than in the Frontignac or Muscat grape. His orange-trees, too, are as large as any he saw when he was young in France, except those of Fontainebleau, or what he has seen since in the Low Countries ; except some very old ones of the Prince of Orange's. Of grapes he had the honour of bringing over four sorts into England, which he enumerates, and supposes that they are all by this time pretty common among some gardeners in his neighbourhood, as well as several persons of quality ; for he ever thought all things of this kind ' the commoner they are made the better '. The garden pedantry with which he asserts that 'tis to little purpose to plant any of the best fruits, as peaches or grapes, hardly, he doubts, beyond Northamptonshire at the furthest northwards ; and praises the ' Bishop of Munster at Cosevelt ', for attempting nothing beyond cherries in that cold climate ; is equally pleasant and in character. ' I may perhaps ' (he thus ends his sweet Garden Essay with a passage worthy of Cowley) ' be allowed to know something of this trade, since I have so long allowed myself to be good for nothing else, which few men will do, or enjoy their gardens, without often looking abroad to see how other matters play, what motions in the state, and what invitations they may hope for into other scenes. For my own part, as the country life, and this part of it more particularly, were the inclination of my youth itself so they are the pleasure of my age ; and I can truly say that, among many great employments that have fallen to

my share, I have never asked or sought for any of them, but have often endeavoured to escape from them, into the ease and freedom of a private scene, where a man may go his own way and his own pace, in the common paths and circles of life. The measure of choosing well is whether a man likes what he has chosen, which I thank God has befallen on me; and though among the follies of my life, building and planting have not been the least, and have cost me more than I have the confidence to own; yet they have been fully recompensed by the sweetness and satisfaction of this retreat, where, since my resolution taken of never entering again into any public employments, I have passed five years without ever once going to town, though I am almost in sight of it, and have a house there always ready to receive me. Nor has this been any sort of affectation, as some have thought it, but a mere want of desire or humour to make so small a remove; for when I am in this corner, I can truly say with Horace, *Me quoties reficit, &c.*

> 'Me, when the cold Digentian stream revives,
> What does my friend believe I think or ask?
> Let me yet less possess, so I may live,
> Whate'er of life remains, unto myself.
> May I have books enough; and one year's store,
> Not to depend upon each doubtful hour:
> This is enough of mighty Jove to pray,
> Who, as he pleases, gives and takes away.'

The writings of Temple are, in general, after this easy copy. On one occasion, indeed, his wit, which was mostly subordinate to nature and tenderness, has seduced him into a string of felicitous antitheses; which, it is obvious to remark, have been a model to Addison and succeeding essayists. 'Who would not be covetous, and with reason,' he says, 'if health could be purchased with gold? Who not ambitious, if it were at the command of power, or restored by honour? but, alas! a white staff will not help gouty feet to walk better than a common cane; nor a blue riband bind up a wound so well as a fillet. The glitter of gold, or of diamonds, will but hurt sore eyes instead of curing them; and an aching head will be no more eased by wearing a crown, than a common night-cap.' In a far better style, and more accordant with his own humour of

plainness, are the concluding sentences of his 'Discourse upon Poetry'. Temple took a part in the controversy about the ancient and the modern learning; and, with that partiality so natural and so graceful in an old man, whose state engagements had left him little leisure to look into modern productions, while his retirement gave him occasion to look back upon the classic studies of his youth —decided in favour of the latter. 'Certain it is,' he says, 'that, whether the fierceness of the Gothic humours, or noise of their perpetual wars, frighted it away, or that the unequal mixture of the modern languages would not bear it—the great heights and excellency both of poetry and music fell with the Roman learning and empire, and have never since recovered the admiration and applauses that before attended them. Yet, such as they are amongst us, they must be confessed to be the softest and sweetest, the most general and most innocent amusements of common time and life. They still find room in the courts of princes, and the cottages of shepherds. They serve to revive and animate the dead calm of poor and idle lives, and to allay or divert the violent passions and perturbations of the greatest and the busiest men. And both these effects are of equal use to human life; for the mind of man is like the sea, which is neither agreeable to the beholder nor the voyager, in a calm or in a storm, but is so to both when a little agitated by gentle gales; and so the mind, when moved by soft and easy passions or affections. I know very well that many who pretend to be wise by the forms of being grave, are apt to despise both poetry and music, as toys and trifles too light for the use or entertainment of serious men. But whoever find themselves wholly insensible to their charms, would, I think, do well to keep their own counsel, for fear of reproaching their own temper, and bringing the goodness of their natures, if not of their understandings, into question. While this world lasts I doubt not but the pleasure and request of these two entertainments will do so too; and happy those that content themselves with these, or any other so easy and so innocent, and do not trouble the world or other men, because they cannot be quiet themselves, though nobody hurts them.' 'When all is done (he concludes), human

life is at the greatest and the best but like a froward child, that must be played with, and humoured a little, to keep it quiet, till it falls asleep, and then the care is over.'

BARBARA S——

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On the noon of the 14th of November, 1743 or 4, I forget which it was, just as the clock had struck one, Barbara S——, with her accustomed punctuality, ascended the long rambling staircase, with awkward interposed landing-places, which led to the office, or rather a sort of box with a desk in it, whereat sat the then Treasurer of (what few of our readers may remember) the Old Bath Theatre. All over the island it was the custom, and remains so I believe to this day, for the players to receive their weekly stipend on the Saturday. It was not much that Barbara had to claim.

This little maid had just entered her eleventh year ; but her important station at the theatre, as it seemed to her, with the benefits which she felt to accrue from her pious application of her small earnings, had given an air of womanhood to her steps and to her behaviour. You would have taken her to have been at least five years older.

Till latterly she had merely been employed in choruses, or where children were wanted to fill up the scene. But the manager, observing a diligence and adroitness in her above her age, had for some few months past intrusted to her the performance of whole parts. You may guess the self-consequence of the promoted Barbara. She had already drawn tears in young Arthur ; had rallied Richard with infantine petulance in the Duke of York ; and in her turn had rebuked that petulance when she was Prince of Wales. She would have done the elder child in Morton's pathetic after-piece to the life ; but as yet the ' Children in the Wood ' was not.

Long after this little girl was grown an aged woman, I have seen some of these small parts, each making two or three pages at most, copied out in the rudest hand of

the then prompter, who doubtless transcribed a little more carefully and fairly for the grown-up tragedy ladies of the establishment. But such as they were, blotted and scrawled, as for a child's use, she kept them all; and in the zenith of her after reputation it was a delightful sight to behold them bound up in costliest Morocco, each single —each small part making a *book*—with fine clasps, gilt-splashed, &c. She had conscientiously kept them as they had been delivered to her; not a blot had been effaced or tampered with. They were precious to her for their affecting remembrancings. They were her principia, her rudiments; the elementary atoms; the little steps by which she pressed forward to perfection. 'What', she would say, 'could Indian rubber, or a pumice stone, have done for these darlings?'

I am in no hurry to begin my story—indeed I have little or none to tell—so I will just mention an observation of hers connected with that interesting time.

Not long before she died I had been discoursing with her on the quantity of real present emotion which a great tragic performer experiences during acting. I ventured to think, that though in the first instance such players must have possessed the feelings which they so powerfully called up in others, yet by frequent repetition those feelings must become deadened in great measure, and the performer trust to the memory of past emotion, rather than express a present one. She indignantly repelled the notion, that with a truly great tragedian the operation, by which such effects were produced upon an audience, could ever degrade itself into what was purely mechanical. With much delicacy, avoiding to instance in her *self*-experience, she told me, that so long ago as when she used to play the part of the Little Son to Mrs. Porter's Isabella (I think it was), when that impressive actress has been bending over her in some heart-rending colloquy, she has felt real hot tears come trickling from her, which (to use her powerful expression) have perfectly scalded her back.

I am not quite so sure that it was Mrs. Porter; but it was some great actress of that day. The name is indifferent; but the fact of the scalding tears I most distinctly remember.

I was always fond of the society of players, and am not sure that an impediment in my speech (which certainly kept me out of the pulpit) even more than certain personal disqualifications, which are often got over in that profession, did not prevent me at one time of life from adopting it. I have had the honour (I must ever call it) once to have been admitted to the tea-table of Miss Kelly. I have played at serious whist with Mr. Liston. I have chatted with ever good-humoured Mrs. Charles Kemble. I have conversed as friend to friend with her accomplished husband. I have been indulged with a classical conference with Macready; and with a sight of the Player-picture gallery, at Mr. Matthews's, when the kind owner, to remunerate me for my love of the old actors (whom he loves so much) went over it with me, supplying to his capital collection, what alone the artist could not give them—voice; and their living motion. Old tones, half-faded, of Dodd, and Parsons, and Baddeley, have lived again for me at his bidding. Only Edwin he could not restore to me. I have supped with——; but I am growing a coxcomb.

As I was about to say—at the desk of the then treasurer of the old Bath theatre—not Diamond's —presented herself the little Barbara S——.

The parents of Barbara had been in reputable circumstances. The father had practised, I believe, as an apothecary in the town. But his practice from causes which I feel my own infirmity too sensibly that way to arraign—or perhaps from that pure infelicity which accompanies some people in their walk through life, and which it is impossible to lay at the door of imprudence—was now reduced to nothing. They were in fact in the very teeth of starvation, when the manager, who knew and respected them in better days, took the little Barbara into his company.

At the period I commenced with, her slender earnings were the sole support of the family, including two younger sisters. I must throw a veil over some mortifying circumstances. Enough to say, that her Saturday's pittance was the only chance of a Sunday's (generally their only) meal of meat.

One thing I will only mention, that in some child's part, where in her theatrical character she was to sup off a roast

fowl (O joy to Barbara !) some comic actor, who was for the night caterer for [1]this dainty—in the misguided humour of his part, threw over the dish such a quantity of salt (O grief and pain of heart to Barbara !) that when he crammed a portion of it into her mouth, she was obliged sputteringly to reject it ; and what with shame of her ill-acted part, and pain of real appetite at missing such a dainty, her little heart sobbed almost to breaking, till a flood of tears, which the well-fed spectators were totally unable to comprehend, mercifully relieved her.

This was the little starved, meritorious maid, who stood before old Ravenscroft, the treasurer, for her Saturday's payment.

Ravenscroft was a man, I have heard many old theatrical people besides herself say, of all men least calculated for a treasurer. He had no head for accounts, paid away at random, kept scarce any books, and summing up at the week's end, if he found himself a pound or so deficient, blest himself that it was no worse.

Now Barbara's weekly stipend was a bare half guinea.—By mistake he popped into her hand a—whole one.

Barbara tripped away.

She was entirely unconscious at first of the mistake : God knows, Ravenscroft would never have discovered it.

But when she had got down to the first of those uncouth landing-places, she became sensible of an unusual weight of metal pressing her little hand.

Now mark the dilemma.

She was by nature a good child. From her parents and those about her she had imbibed no contrary influence. But then they had taught her nothing. Poor men's smoky cabins are not always porticoes of moral philosophy. This little maid had no instinct to evil, but then she might be said to have no fixed principle. She had heard honesty commended, but never dreamed of its application to herself. She thought of it as something which concerned grown-up people—men and women. She had never known temptation, or thought of preparing resistance against it.

Her first impulse was to go back to the old treasurer, and explain to him his blunder. He was already so con-

[1] this] this stage 1825.

fused with age, besides a natural want of punctuality, that she would have had some difficulty in making him understand it. She saw *that* in an instant. And then it was such a bit of money! and then the image of a larger allowance of butcher's meat on their table next day came across her, till her little eyes glistened, and her mouth moistened. But then Mr. Ravenscroft had always been so good-natured, had stood her friend behind the scenes, and even recommended her promotion to some of her little parts. But again the old man was reputed to be worth a world of money. He was supposed to have fifty pounds a year clear of the theatre. And then came staring upon her the figure of her little stockingless and shoeless sisters. And when she looked at her own neat white cotton stockings, which her situation at the theatre had made it indispensable for her mother to provide for her, with hard straining and pinching from the family stock, and thought how glad she should be to cover their poor feet with the same—and how then they could accompany her to rehearsals, which they had hitherto been precluded from doing, by reason of their unfashionable attire—in these thoughts she reached the second landing-place—the second, I mean from the top—for there was still another left to traverse.

Now virtue support Barbara!

And that never-failing friend did step in—for at that moment a strength not her own, I have heard her say, was revealed to her—a reason above reasoning—and without her own agency, as it seemed (for she never felt her feet to move), she found herself transported back to the individual desk she had just quitted, and her hand in the old hand of Ravenscroft, who in silence took back the refunded treasure, and who had been sitting (good man) insensible to the lapse of minutes, which to her were anxious ages; and from that moment a deep peace fell upon her heart, and she knew the quality of honesty.

A year or two's unrepining application to her profession brightened up the feet, and the prospects, of her little sisters, set the whole family upon their legs again, and released her from the difficulty of discussing moral dogmas upon a landing-place.

I have heard her say, that it was a surprise, not much

short of mortification to her, to see the coolness with which the old man pocketed the difference, which had caused her such mortal throes.

This anecdote of herself I had in the year 1800, from the mouth of the late Mrs. Crawford,[a] then sixty-seven years of age (she died soon after); and to her struggles upon this childish occasion I have sometimes ventured to think her indebted for that power of rending the heart in the representation of conflicting emotions, for which in after years she was considered as little inferior (if at all so in the part of Lady Randolph) even to Mrs. Siddons.

THE TOMBS IN THE ABBEY

IN A LETTER TO R—— S——, ESQ.

[Printed, as portion of the *Letter of Elia to Robert Southey*, in *The London Magazine*, vol. viii, no. xlvi, p. 405 (Oct., 1823). Collected under above title in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

[1]Though in some points of doctrine, and perhaps of discipline, I am diffident of lending a perfect assent to that church which you have so worthily *historified*, yet may the ill time never come to me, when with a chilled heart, or a portion of irreverent sentiment, I shall enter her beautiful and time-hallowed Edifices. Judge then of my mortification when, after attending the choral anthems of last Wednesday at Westminster, and being desirous of renewing my acquaintance, after lapsed years, with the tombs and antiquities there, I found myself excluded; turned out like a dog, or some profane person, into the common street, with feelings not very congenial to the place, or to the solemn service which I had been listening to. It was a jar after that music.

You had your education at Westminster; and doubtless among those dim aisles and cloisters, you must have gathered

[a] The maiden name of this lady was Street, which she changed, by successive marriages, for those of Dancer, Barry, and Crawford. She was Mrs. Crawford, and a third time a widow, when I knew her.

[1] *This paragraph was re-written in* 1833. *For the text of* 1823 *see* p. 299 *above.*

much of that devotional feeling in those young years, on which your purest mind feeds still—and may it feed! The antiquarian spirit, strong in you, and gracefully blending ever with the religious, may have been sown in you among those wrecks of splendid mortality. You owe it to the place of your education; you owe it to your learned fondness for the architecture of your ancestors; you owe it to the venerableness of your ecclesiastical establishment, which is daily lessened and called in question through these practices—to speak aloud your sense of them; never to desist raising your voice against them, till they be totally done away with and abolished; till the doors of Westminster Abbey be no longer closed against the decent, though low-in-purse, enthusiast, or blameless devotee, who must commit an injury against his family economy, if he would be indulged with a bare admission within its walls. You owe it to the decencies, which you wish to see maintained in its impressive services, that our Cathedral be no longer an object of inspection to the poor at those times only, in which they must rob from their attendance on the worship every minute which they can bestow upon the fabric. In vain the public prints have taken up this subject, in vain such poor nameless writers as myself express their indignation. A word from you, Sir—a hint in your Journal—would be sufficient to fling open the doors of the Beautiful Temple again, as we can remember them when we were boys. At that time of life, what would the imaginative faculty (such as it is) in both of us, have suffered, if the entrance to so much reflection had been obstructed by the demand of so much silver!—If we had scraped it up to gain an occasional admission (as we certainly should have done) would the sight of those old tombs have been as impressive to us (while we had been weighing anxiously prudence against sentiment) as when the gates stood open, as those of the adjacent Park; when we could walk in at any time, as the mood brought us, for a shorter or longer time, as that lasted? Is the being shown over a place the same as silently for ourselves detecting the genius of it? In no part of our beloved Abbey now can a person find entrance (out of service time) under the sum of *two shillings*. The rich and the great will smile

at the anti-climax, presumed to lie in these two short words. But you can tell them, Sir, how much quiet worth, how much capacity for enlarged feeling, how much taste and genius, may coexist, especially in youth, with a purse incompetent to this demand.—A respected friend of ours, during his late visit to the metropolis, presented himself for admission to Saint Paul's. At the same time a decently clothed man, with as decent a wife, and child, were bargaining for the same indulgence. The price was only two-pence each person. The poor but decent man hesitated, desirous to go in; but there were three of them, and he turned away reluctantly. Perhaps he wished to have seen the tomb of Nelson. Perhaps the Interior of the Cathedral was his object. But in the state of his finances, even sixpence might reasonably seem too much. Tell the Aristocracy of the country (no man can do it more impressively); instruct them of what value these insignificant pieces of money, these minims to their sight, may be to their humbler brethren. Shame these Sellers out of the [1]Temple. Stifle not the suggestions of your better nature with the [2]pretext, that an indiscriminate admission would expose the Tombs to violation. Remember your boy-days. Did you ever see, or hear, of a mob in the Abbey, while it was free to all? [3]Do the rabble come there, or trouble their heads about such speculations? It is all that you can do to drive them into your churches; they do not voluntarily offer themselves. They have, alas! no passion for antiquities; for tomb of king or prelate, sage or poet. If they had, they would be no longer the rabble.

For forty years that I have known the Fabric, the only well-attested charge of violation adduced, has been—a ridiculous dismemberment committed upon the effigy of that amiable spy, Major André. And is it for this—the wanton mischief of some schoolboy, fired perhaps with

[1] Temple.] Temple. Show the poor, that you can sometimes think of them in some other light than as mutineers and mal-contents. Conciliate them by such kind methods to their superiors, civil and ecclesiastical. Stop the mouths of the railers; and suffer your old friends, upon the old terms, again to honour and admire you. 1823. [2] pretext] stale evasion 1823. [3] Do] Did 1823.

raw notions of Transatlantic Freedom—or the remote possibility of such a mischief occurring again, so easily to be prevented by stationing a constable within the walls, if the vergers are incompetent to the duty—is it upon such wretched pretences, that the people of England are made to pay a new Peter's Pence, so long abrogated; or must content themselves with contemplating the ragged Exterior of their Cathedral? The mischief was done about the time that you were a scholar there. Do you know any thing about the unfortunate [1]relic?—

AMICUS REDIVIVUS

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. viii, no. xlviii, p. 613 (Dec., 1823). Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1823. Text of 1833.]

> Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
> Clos'd o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?

I DO not know when I have experienced a stranger sensation, than on seeing my old friend G. D., who had been paying me a morning visit a few Sundays back, at my cottage [2]at Islington, upon taking leave, instead of turning down the right hand path by which he had entered —with staff in hand, and at noon day, deliberately march right forwards into the midst of the stream that runs by us, and totally disappear.

A spectacle like this at dusk would have been appalling enough; but, in the broad open daylight, to witness such an unreserved motion towards self-destruction in a valued friend, took from me all power of speculation.

How I found my feet, I know not. Consciousness was quite gone. Some spirit, not my own, whirled me to the spot. I remember nothing but the silvery apparition of a good white head emerging; nigh which a staff (the hand unseen that wielded it) pointed upwards, as feeling for the skies. In a moment (if time was in that time) he was on my shoulders, and I—freighted with a load more precious than his who bore Anchises.

And here I cannot but do justice to the officious zeal of sundry passers by, who, albeit arriving a little too late to

[1] *For the conclusion of* 1823 *see p.* 302 *above.* [2] at] near 1823.

participate in the honours of the rescue, in philanthropic shoals came thronging to communicate their advice as to the recovery; prescribing variously the application, or non-application, of salt, &c., to the person of the patient. Life meantime was ebbing fast away, amidst the stifle of conflicting judgments, when one, more sagacious than the rest, by a bright thought, proposed sending for the Doctor. Trite as the counsel was, and impossible, as one should think, to be missed on,—shall I confess ?—in this emergency, it was to me as if an Angel had spoken. Great previous exertions—and mine had not been inconsiderable —are commonly followed by a debility of purpose. This was a moment of irresolution.

Monoculus—for so, in default of catching his true name, I choose to designate the medical gentleman who now appeared—is a grave, middle-aged person, who, without having studied at the college, or truckled to the pedantry of a diploma, hath employed a great portion of his valuable time in experimental processes upon the bodies of unfortunate fellow-creatures, in whom the vital spark, to mere vulgar thinking, would seem extinct, and lost for ever. He omitteth no occasion of obtruding his services, from a case of common surfeit-suffocation to the ignobler obstructions, sometimes induced by a too wilful application of the plant *Cannabis* outwardly. But though he declineth not altogether these drier extinctions, his occupation tendeth for the most part to water-practice; for the convenience of which, he hath judiciously fixed his quarters near the grand repository of the stream mentioned,[a] where, day and night, from his little watch-tower, at the Middleton's-Head, he listeneth to detect the wrecks of drowned mortality—partly, as he saith, to be upon the spot—and partly, because the liquids which he useth to prescribe to himself and his patients, on these distressing occasions, are ordinarily more conveniently to be found at these common hostelries, than in the shops and phials of the apothecaries. His ear hath arrived to such finesse by practice, that it

[a] The topography of my cottage, and its relation to the river, will explain this; as I have been at some cost to have the whole engraved (in time, I hope, for our next number) as well for the satisfaction of the reader, as to commemorate so signal a deliverance [1823 *only*].

is reported, he can distinguish a plunge at [1]a half furlong distance; and can tell, if it be casual or deliberate. He weareth a medal, suspended over a suit, originally of a sad brown, but which, by time, and frequency of nightly divings, has been dinged into a true professional sable. He passeth by the name of Doctor, and is remarkable for wanting his left eye. His remedy—after a sufficient application of warm blankets, friction, &c., is a simple tumbler, or more, of the purest Cognac, with water, made as hot as the convalescent can bear it. Where he findeth, as in the case of my friend, a squeamish subject, he condescendeth to be the taster; and showeth, by his own example, the innocuous nature of the prescription. Nothing can be more kind or encouraging than this procedure. It addeth confidence to the patient, to see his medical adviser go hand in hand with himself in the remedy. When the doctor swalloweth his own draught, what peevish invalid can refuse to pledge him in the potion? In fine, MONOCULUS is a humane, sensible man, who, for a slender pittance, scarce enough to sustain life, is content to wear it out in the endeavour to save the lives of others—his pretensions so moderate, that with difficulty I could press a crown upon him, for the price of restoring the existence of such an invaluable creature to society as G. D.

It was pleasant to observe the effect of the subsiding alarm upon the nerves of the dear absentee. It seemed to have given a shake to memory, calling up notice after notice, of all the providential deliverances he had experienced in the course of his long and innocent life. Sitting up in my couch—my couch which, naked and void of furniture hitherto, for the salutary repose which it administered, shall be honoured with costly valance, at some price, and henceforth be a state-bed at Colebrooke,—he discoursed of marvellous escapes—by carelessness of nurses—by pails of gelid, and kettles of the boiling element, in infancy—by orchard pranks, and snapping twigs, in schoolboy frolics —by descent of tiles at Trumpington, and of heavier tomes at Pembroke—by studious watchings, inducing frightful vigilance—by want, and the fear of want, and all the sore throbbings of the learned head.—Anon, he would

[1] a half furlong] a furlong and a half 1823.

burst out into little fragments of chaunting—of songs long ago—ends of deliverance-hymns, not remembered before since childhood, but coming up now, when his heart was made tender as a child's—for the *tremor cordis*, in the retrospect of a recent deliverance, as in a case of impending danger, acting upon an innocent heart, will produce a self-tenderness, which we should do ill to christen cowardice; and Shakspeare, in the latter crisis, has made his good Sir Hugh to remember the sitting by Babylon, and to mutter of shallow rivers.

Waters of Sir Hugh Middleton—what a spark you were like to have extinguished for ever! Your salubrious streams to this City, for now near two centuries, would hardly have atoned for what you were in a moment washing away. Mockery of a river—liquid artifice—wretched conduit! henceforth rank with canals, and sluggish aqueducts. Was it for this, that, smit in boyhood with the explorations of that Abyssinian traveller, I paced the vales of Amwell to explore your tributary springs, to trace your salutary waters sparkling through green Hertfordshire and cultured Enfield parks?—Ye have no swans—no Naiads—no river God—or did the benevolent hoary aspect of my friend tempt ye to suck him in, that ye also might have the tutelary genius of your waters?

Had he been drowned in Cam there would have been some consonancy in it; but what willows had ye to wave and rustle over his moist sepulture?—or, having no *name*, besides that unmeaning assumption of *eternal novity*, did ye think to get one by the noble prize, and henceforth to be termed the Stream Dyerian?

> And could such spacious virtue find a grave
> Beneath the imposthumed bubble of a wave?

I protest, George, you shall not venture out again—no, not by daylight—without a sufficient pair of spectacles—in your musing moods especially. Your absence of mind we have borne, till your presence of body came to be called in question by it. You shall not go wandering into Euripus with Aristotle, if we can help it. Fie, man, to turn dipper at your years, after your many tracts in favour of sprinkling only!

I have nothing but water in my head o' nights since this frightful accident. Sometimes I am with Clarence in his dream. At others, I behold Christian beginning to sink, and crying out to his good brother Hopeful (that is [1]to me), 'I sink in deep waters; the billows go over my head, all the waves go over me. Selah.' Then I have before me Palinurus, just letting go the steerage. I cry out too late to save. Next follow—a mournful procession —*suicidal faces*, saved against their wills from drowning; dolefully trailing a length of reluctant gratefulness, with ropy weeds pendant from locks of watchet hue—constrained Lazari—Pluto's half-subjects—stolen fees from the grave —bilking Charon of his fare. At their head Arion—or is it G. D. ?—in his singing garments marcheth singly, with harp in hand, and votive garland, which Machaon (or Dr. Hawes) snatcheth straight, intending to suspend it to the stern God of Sea. Then follow dismal streams of Lethe, in which the half-drenched on earth are constrained to drown downright, by wharfs where Ophelia twice acts her muddy death.

And, doubtless, there is some notice in that invisible world, when one of us approacheth (as my friend did so lately) to their inexorable precincts. When a soul knocks once, twice, at death's door, the sensation aroused within the palace must be considerable; and the grim Feature, by modern science so often dispossessed of his prey, must have learned by this time to pity Tantalus.

A pulse assuredly was felt along the line of the Elysian shades, when the near arrival of G. D. was announced by no equivocal indications. From their seats of Asphodel arose the gentler and the graver ghosts—poet, or historian —of Grecian or of Roman lore—to crown with unfading chaplets the half-finished love-labours of their unwearied scholiast. Him Markland expected—him Tyrwhitt hoped to encounter—him the sweet lyrist of Peter House, whom he had barely seen upon earth,[a] with newest airs prepared to greet ——; and, patron of the gentle Christ's boy,— who should have been his patron through life—the mild

[a] Graium *tantum vidit.*

[1] to *omit* 1823.

Askew, with longing aspirations, leaned foremost from his venerable Æsculapian chair, to welcome into that happy company the matured virtues of the man, whose tender scions in the boy he himself upon earth had so prophetically fed and watered.

SOME SONNETS OF SIR PHILIP SYDNEY

[Printed, under the title *Nugæ Criticæ*: *By the Author of Elia. No. I. Defence of the Sonnets of Sir Philip Sydney,* in *The London Magazine,* vol. viii, no. xlv, p. 248; signed *L.* Collected under above title in *The Last Essays of Elia,* 1833. Text of 1833.]

Sydney's Sonnets—I speak of the best of them—are among the very best of their sort. They fall below the plain moral dignity, the sanctity, and high yet modest spirit of self-approval, of Milton, in his compositions of a similar structure. They are in truth what Milton, censuring the Arcadia, says of that work (to which they are a sort of after-tune or application), 'vain and amatorious' enough, yet the things in their kind (as he confesses to be true of the romance) may be 'full of worth and wit'. They savour of the Courtier, it must be allowed, and not of the Commonwealthsman. But Milton was a Courtier when he wrote the Masque at Ludlow Castle, and still more a Courtier when he composed the Arcades. When the national struggle was to begin, he becomingly cast these vanities behind him; and if the order of time had thrown Sir Philip upon the crisis which preceded the Revolution, there is no reason why he should not have acted the same part in that emergency, which has glorified the name of a later Sydney. He did not want for plainness or boldness of spirit. His letter on the French match may testify, he could speak his mind freely to Princes. The times did not call him to the scaffold.

The Sonnets which we oftenest call to mind of Milton were the compositions of his maturest years. Those of Sydney, which I am about to produce, were written in the very hey-day of his blood. They are stuck full of amorous fancies—far-fetched conceits, befitting his occupation; for True Love thinks no labour to send out Thoughts upon

the vast, and more than Indian voyages, to bring home rich pearls, outlandish wealth, gums, jewels, spicery, to sacrifice in self-depreciating similitudes, as shadows of true amiabilities in the Beloved. We must be Lovers—or at least the cooling touch of time, the *circum præcordia frigus*, must not have so damped our faculties, as to take away our recollection that we were once so—before we can duly appreciate the glorious vanities, and graceful hyperboles, of the passion. The images which lie before our feet (though by some accounted the only natural) are least natural for the high Sydnean love to express its fancies by. They may serve for the loves of Tibullus, or the dear Author of the Schoolmistress; for passions that creep and whine in Elegies and Pastoral Ballads. I am sure Milton never loved at this rate. I am afraid some of his addresses (*ad Leonoram* I mean) have rather erred on the farther side; and that the poet came not much short of a religious indecorum, when he could thus apostrophise a singing-girl :—

Angelus unicuique suus (sic credite gentes)
Obtigit aetheriis ales ab ordinibus.
Quid mirum, Leonora, tibi si gloria major,
Nam tua praesentem vox sonat ipsa Deum ?
Aut Deus, aut vacui certè mens tertia coeli,
Per tua secretô guttura serpit agens;
Serpit agens, facilisque docet mortalia corda
Sensim immortali assuescere posse sono.
QUOD SI CUNCTA QUIDEM DEUS EST, PER CUNCTAQUE FUSUS,
IN TE UNÂ LOQUITUR, CAETERA MUTUS HABET.

This is loving in a strange fashion; and it requires some candour of construction (besides the slight darkening of a dead language) to cast a veil over the ugly appearance of something very like blasphemy in the last two verses. I think the Lover would have been staggered, if he had gone about to express the same thought in English. I am sure, Sydney has no flights like this. His extravaganzas do not strike at the sky, though he takes leave to adopt the pale Dian into a fellowship with his mortal passions.

I

With how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the skies;
How silently; and with how wan a face!
What! may it be, that even in heavenly place
That busy Archer his sharp arrows tries ?

Sure, if that long-with-love-acquainted eyes
Can judge of love, thou feel'st a lover's case;
I read it in thy looks; thy languisht grace
To me, that feel the like, thy state descries.
Then, even of fellowship, O Moon, tell me,
Is constant love deem'd there but want of wit?
Are beauties there as proud as here they be?
Do they above love to be loved, and yet
Those lovers scorn, whom that love doth possess?
Do they call *virtue* there—*ungratefulness?*

The last line of this poem is a little obscured by transposition. He means, Do they call ungratefulness there a virtue?

II

Come, Sleep, O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
The indifferent judge between the high and low;
With shield of proof shield me from out the prease [a]
Of those fierce darts despair at me doth throw;
O make in me those civil wars to cease:
I will good tribute pay, if thou do so.
Take thou of me sweet pillows, sweetest bed;
A chamber deaf to noise, and blind to light;
A rosy garland, and a weary head.
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, STELLA'S image see.

III

The curious wits, seeing dull pensiveness
Bewray itself in my long-settled eyes,
Whence those same fumes of melancholy rise,
With idle pains, and missing aim, do guess.
Some, that know how my spring I did address,
Deem that my Muse some fruit of knowledge plies;
Others, because the Prince my service tries,
Think, that I think state errors to redress;
But harder judges judge, ambition's rage,
Scourge of itself, still climbing slippery place,
Holds my young brain captiv'd in golden cage.
O fools, or over-wise! alas, the race
Of all my thoughts hath neither stop nor start,
But only STELLA'S eyes, and STELLA'S heart.

[a] Press.

IV

Because I oft in dark abstracted guise
Seem most alone in greatest company,
With dearth of words, or answers quite awry,
To them that would make speech of speech arise;
They deem, and of their doom the rumour flies,
That poison foul of bubbling *Pride* doth lie
So in my swelling breast, that only I
Fawn on myself, and others do despise;
Yet *Pride*, I think, doth not my Soul possess,
Which looks too oft in his unflattering glass:
But one worse fault—*Ambition*—I confess,
That makes me oft my best friends overpass,
Unseen, unheard—while Thought to highest place
Bends all his powers, even unto STELLA'S grace.

V

Having this day, my horse, my hand, my lance,
Guided so well that I obtained the prize,
Both by the judgment of the English eyes,
And of some sent from that *sweet enemy*,—France;
Horsemen my skill in horsemanship advance;
Townsfolk my strength; a daintier judge applies
His praise to sleight, which from good use doth rise;
Some lucky wits impute it but to chance;
Others, because of both sides I do take
My blood from them, who did excel in this,
Think Nature me a man of arms did make.
How far they shot awry! the true cause is,
STELLA look'd on, and from her heavenly face
Sent forth the beams which made so fair my race.

VI

In martial sports I had my cunning tried,
And yet to break more staves did me address,
While with the people's shouts (I must confess)
Youth, luck, and praise, even fill'd my veins with pride
When Cupid, having me (his slave) descried
In Mars's livery, prancing in the press,
'What now, Sir Fool!' said he; 'I would no less:
Look here, I say.' I look'd, and STELLA spied,
Who hard by made a window send forth light.
My heart then quak'd, then dazzled were mine eyes;
One hand forgot to rule, th'other to fight;
Nor trumpet's sound I heard, nor friendly cries.
My foe came on, and beat the air for me—
Till that her blush made me my shame to see.

VII

No more, my dear, no more these counsels try;
O give my passions leave to run their race;
Let Fortune lay on me her worst disgrace;
Let folk o'er-charged with brain against me cry;
Let clouds bedim my face, break in mine eye;
Let me no steps, but of lost labour, trace;
Let all the earth with scorn recount my case—
But do not will me from my love to fly.
I do not envy Aristotle's wit,
Nor do aspire to Cæsar's bleeding fame;
Nor aught do care, though some above me sit;
Nor hope, nor wish, another course to frame,
But that which once may win thy cruel heart:
Thou art my wit, and thou my virtue art.

VIII

Love still a boy, and oft a wanton, is,
School'd only by his mother's tender eye;
What wonder then, if he his lesson miss,
When for so soft a rod dear play he try?
And yet my Star, because a sugar'd kiss
In sport I suck'd, while she asleep did lie,
Doth lour, nay chide, nay threat, for only this.
Sweet, it was saucy Love, not humble I.
But no 'scuse serves; she makes her wrath appear
In beauty's throne—see now, who dares come near
Those scarlet judges, threat'ning bloody pain?
O heav'nly Fool, thy most kiss-worthy face
Anger invests with such a lovely grace,
That anger's self I needs must kiss again.

IX

I never drank of Aganippe well,
Nor ever did in shade of Tempe sit,
And Muses scorn with vulgar brains to dwell;
Poor lay-man I, for sacred rites unfit.
Some do I hear of Poets' fury tell,
But (God wot) wot not what they mean by it;
And this I swear by blackest brook of hell,
I am no pick-purse of another's wit.
How falls it then, that with so smooth an ease
My thoughts I speak, and what I speak doth flow
In verse, and that my verse best wits doth please?
Guess me the cause—what is it thus?—fye, no.
Or so?—much less. How then? sure thus it is,
My lips are sweet, inspired with Stella's kiss.

X

Of all the kings that ever here did reign,
Edward, named Fourth, as first in praise I name,
Not for his fair outside, nor well-lined brain—
Although less gifts imp feathers oft on Fame.
Nor that he could, young-wise, wise-valiant, frame
His sire's revenge, join'd with a kingdom's gain;
And, gain'd by Mars could yet mad Mars so tame,
That Balance weigh'd what Sword did late obtain.
Nor that he made the Floure-de-luce so 'fraid,
Though strongly hedged of bloody Lions' paws
That witty Lewis to him a tribute paid.
Nor this, nor that, nor any such small cause—
But only, for this worthy knight durst prove
To lose his crown rather than fail his love.

XI

O happy Thames, that didst my STELLA bear,
I saw thyself, with many a smiling line
Upon thy cheerful face, Joy's livery wear,
While those fair planets on thy streams did shine;
The boat for joy could not to dance forbear,
While wanton winds, with beauty so divine
Ravish'd, stay'd not, till in her golden hair
They did themselves (O sweetest prison) twine.
And fain those Æol's youth there would their stay
Have made; but, forced by nature still to fly,
First did with puffing kiss those locks display.
She, so dishevell'd, blush'd; from window I
With sight thereof cried out, O fair disgrace,
Let honour's self to thee grant highest place!

XII

Highway, since you my chief Parnassus be;
And that my Muse, to some ears not unsweet,
Tempers her words to trampling horses' feet,
More soft than to a chamber melody,—
Now blessed You bear onward blessed Me
To Her, where I my heart safe left shall meet,
My Muse and I must you of duty greet
With thanks and wishes, wishing thankfully.
Be you still fair, honour'd by public heed,
By no encroachment wrong'd, nor time forgot;
Nor blam'd for blood, nor shamed for sinful deed.
And that you know, I envy you no lot
Of highest wish, I wish you so much bliss,
Hundreds of years you STELLA's feet may kiss.

Of the foregoing, the first, the second, and the last sonnet, are my favourites. But the general beauty of them all is, that they are so perfectly characteristical. The spirit of 'learning and of chivalry',—of which union, Spenser has entitled Sydney to have been the 'president', —shines through them. I confess I can see nothing of the 'jejune' or 'frigid' in them; much less of the 'stiff' and 'cumbrous'—which I have sometimes heard objected to the Arcadia. The verse runs off swiftly and gallantly. It might have been tuned to the trumpet; or tempered (as himself expresses it) to 'trampling horses' feet'. They abound in felicitous phrases—

> O heav'nly Fool, thy most kiss-worthy face—
>
> *8th Sonnet.*
>
> ———Sweet pillows, sweetest bed;
> A chamber deaf to noise, and blind to light;
> A rosy garland, and a weary head.
>
> *2nd Sonnet.*
>
> ———That sweet enemy,—France—
>
> *5th Sonnet.*

But they are not rich in words only, in vague and unlocalised feelings—the failing too much of some poetry of the present day—they are full, material, and circumstantiated. Time and place appropriates every one of them. It is not a fever of passion wasting itself upon a thin diet of dainty [1]words, but a transcendent passion pervading and illuminating action, pursuits, studies, feats of arms, the opinions of contemporaries and his judgment of them. An historical thread runs through them, which almost affixes a date to them; marks the *when* and *where* they were written.

I have dwelt the longer upon what I conceive the merit of these poems, because I have been hurt by the wantonness (I wish I could treat it by a gentler name) with which [2]W. H. takes every occasion of insulting the memory of Sir Philip Sydney. But the decisions of the Author of Table Talk, &c., (most profound and subtle where they are, as for the most part, just) are more safely to be relied upon, on subjects and authors he has a partiality for, than

[1] *For a footnote of* 1823, *here omitted, see Editor's Notes.* [2] W. H.] a favourite critic of our day 1823.

on such as he has conceived an accidental prejudice against. Milton wrote sonnets, and was a king-hater; and it was congenial perhaps to sacrifice a courtier to a patriot. But I was unwilling to lose a *fine idea* from my mind. The noble images, passions, sentiments, and poetical delicacies of character, scattered all over the Arcadia (spite of some stiffness and encumberment), justify to me the character which his contemporaries have left us of the writer. I cannot think with [1]the Critic, that Sir Philip Sydney was that *opprobrious thing* which a foolish nobleman in his insolent hostility chose to term him. I call to mind the epitaph [2]made on him, to guide me to juster thoughts of him; and I repose upon the beautiful lines in the 'Friend's Passion for his Astrophel', printed with the Elegies of Spenser and others.

You knew—who knew not Astrophel?
(That I should live to say I knew,
And have not in possession still!)—
Things known permit me to renew—
Of him you know his merit such,
I cannot say—you hear—too much.

Within these woods of Arcady
He chief delight and pleasure took;
And on the mountain Partheny,
Upon the crystal liquid brook,
The Muses met him every day,
That taught him sing, to write, and say.

When he descended down the mount,
His personage seemed most divine:
A thousand graces one might count
Upon his lovely chearful eyne,
To hear him speak, and sweetly smile,
You were in Paradise the while.

A sweet attractive kind of grace;
A full assurance given by looks;
Continual comfort in a face,
The lineaments of Gospel books—
I trow that count'nance cannot lye,
Whose thoughts are legible in the eye.
* * * * * *

[1] the Critic] Mr. Hazlitt 1823. [2] made of Lord Brooke 1823.

Above all others this is he,
Which erst approved in his song,
That love and honour might agree,
And that pure love will do no wrong.
Sweet saints, it is no sin or blame
To love a man of virtuous name.

Did never Love so sweetly breathe
In any mortal breast before:
Did never Muse inspire beneath
A Poet's brain with finer store.
He wrote of Love with high conceit,
And Beauty rear'd above her height.

Or let any one read the deeper sorrows (grief running into rage) in the Poem,—the last in the collection accompanying the above,—which from internal testimony I believe to be Lord Brooke's,—beginning with 'Silence augmenteth grief',—and then seriously ask himself, whether the subject of such absorbing and confounding regrets could have been *that thing* which Lord Oxford termed him.

NEWSPAPERS THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

[Printed under the title, *Peter's Net. By the Author of 'Elia'. No. II.—On the Total Defect of the faculty of Imagination, observable in the works of modern British Artists,* in *The Englishman's Magazine,* vol. ii, no. ii, p. 137 (Oct., 1831). See *Recollections of a late Royal Academician,* p. 429 above. Collected under above title in *The Last Essays of Elia,* 1833. Text of 1833.]

Dan Stuart once told us, that he did not remember that he ever deliberately walked into the Exhibition at Somerset House in his life. He might occasionally have escorted a party of ladies across the way that were going in; but he never went in of his own head. Yet the office of the Morning Post newspaper stood then just where it does now—we are carrying you back, Reader, some thirty years [1]or more—with its gilt-globe-topt front facing that emporium of our artists' grand Annual Exposure. We sometimes wish, that we had observed the same abstinence with Daniel.

A word or two of D. S. He ever appeared to us one of the finest tempered of Editors. Perry, of the Morning

[1] or more *omit* 1831.

Chronicle, was equally pleasant, with a dash, no slight one either, of the courtier. S. was frank, plain, and English all over. We have worked for both these gentlemen.

It is soothing to contemplate the head of the Ganges; to trace the first little bubblings of a mighty river;

> With holy reverence to approach the rocks,
> Whence glide the streams renowned in ancient song.

Fired with a perusal of the Abyssinian Pilgrim's exploratory ramblings after the cradle of the infant Nilus, we well remember on one fine summer holyday (a 'whole day's leave' we called it at Christ's Hospital) sallying forth at rise of sun, not very well provisioned either for such an undertaking, to trace the current of the New River—Middletonian stream!—to its scaturient source, as we had read, in meadows by fair Amwell. Gallantly did we commence our solitary quest—for it was essential to the dignity of a DISCOVERY, that no eye of schoolboy, save our own, should beam on the detection. By flowery spots, and verdant lanes, skirting Hornsey, Hope trained us on in many a baffling turn; endless, hopeless meanders, as it seemed; or as if the jealous waters had *dodged* us, reluctant to have the humble spot of their nativity revealed; till spent, and nigh famished, before set of the same sun, we sate down somewhere by Bowes Farm, near Tottenham, with a tithe of our proposed labours only yet accomplished; sorely convinced in spirit, that that Brucian enterprise was as yet too arduous for our young shoulders.

Not more refreshing to the thirsty curiosity of the traveller is the tracing of some mighty waters up to their shallow fontlet, than it is to a pleased and candid reader to go back to the inexperienced essays, the first callow flights in authorship, of some established name in literature; from the Gnat which preluded to the Æneid, to the Duck which Samuel Johnson trod on.

[1]In those days every Morning Paper, as an essential retainer to its establishment, kept an author, who was

[1] *In* 1831 *this paragraph begins:*—We ourself—PETER—in whose inevitable NET already Managers and R. A.s lie caught and floundering—and more peradventure shall flounder—were, in the humble times to which we have been recurring, small Fishermen indeed, essaying upon minnows; angling for quirks, not *men*. In those days *etc.*

bound to furnish daily a quantum of witty paragraphs. Sixpence a joke—and it was thought pretty high too—was Dan Stuart's settled remuneration in these cases. The chat of the day, scandal, but, above all, *dress*, furnished the material. The length of no paragraph was to exceed seven lines. Shorter they might be, but they must be poignant.

A fashion of *flesh*, or rather *pink*-coloured hose for the ladies, luckily coming up at the juncture, when we were on our probation for the place of Chief Jester to S.'s Paper, established our reputation in that line. We were pronounced a 'capital hand'. O the conceits which we varied upon *red* in all its prismatic differences! from the trite and obvious flower of Cytherea, to the [1]flaming costume of the lady that has her sitting upon 'many waters'. Then there was the collateral topic of ancles. What an occasion to a truly chaste writer, like ourself, of touching that nice brink, and yet never tumbling over it, of a seemingly ever approximating something 'not quite proper'; while, like a skilful posture-master, balancing betwixt decorums and their opposites, he keeps the line, from which a hair's-breath deviation is destruction; hovering in the confines of light and darkness, or where 'both seem either'; a hazy uncertain delicacy; Autolycus-like in the Play, still putting off his expectant auditory with 'Whoop, do me no harm, good man!' But, above all, that conceit arrided us most at [2]that time, and still tickles our midriff to remember, where, allusively to the flight of Astræa—*ultima Cœlestûm terras reliquit*—we pronounced—in reference to the stockings still—that MODESTY TAKING HER FINAL LEAVE OF MORTALS, HER LAST BLUSH WAS VISIBLE IN HER ASCENT TO THE HEAVENS BY THE TRACT OF THE GLOWING INSTEP. This might be called the crowning conceit; and was esteemed tolerable writing in those days.

But the fashion of jokes, with all other things, passes away; as did the transient mode which had so favoured us. The ancles of our fair friends in a few weeks began to reassume their whiteness, and left us scarce a leg to stand upon. Other female whims followed, but none,

[1] flaming] flaunting 1831. [2] that] the 1831.

methought, so pregnant, so invitatory of shrewd conceits, and more than single meanings.

Somebody has said, that to swallow six cross-buns daily consecutively for a fortnight would surfeit the stoutest digestion. But to have to furnish as many jokes daily, and that not for a fortnight, but for a long twelvemonth, as we were constrained to do, was a little harder [1]execution. 'Man goeth forth to his work until the evening'—from a reasonable hour in the morning, we presume it was meant. Now as our main occupation took us up from eight till five every day in the City; and as our evening hours, at that time of life, had generally to do with any thing rather than business, it follows, that the only time we could spare for this manufactory of jokes—our supplementary livelihood, that supplied us in every want beyond mere bread and cheese—was exactly that part of the day which (as we have heard of No Man's Land) may be fitly denominated No Man's Time; that is, no time in which a man ought to be up, and awake, in. To speak more plainly, it is that time, of an hour, or an hour and a half's duration, in which a man, whose occasions call him up so preposterously, has to wait for his breakfast.

O those headaches at dawn of day, when at five, or half-past-five in summer, and not much later in the dark seasons, we were compelled to rise, having been perhaps not above four hours in bed—(for we were no go-to-beds with the lamb, though we anticipated the lark ofttimes in her [2]rising—we liked a parting cup at midnight, as all young men did before these effeminate times, and to have our friends about us—we were not constellated under Aquarius, that watery sign, and therefore incapable of Bacchus, cold, washy, bloodless—we were none of your Basilian water-sponges, nor had taken our degrees at Mount Ague—we were right toping Capulets, jolly companions, we and they)—but to have to get up, as we said before, curtailed of half our fair sleep, fasting, with only a dim vista of refreshing Bohea in the distance—to be necessitated to rouse ourselves at the detestable rap of an old hag of a domestic, who seemed to take a diabolical pleasure in her announcement that it was 'time to rise'; and whose

[1] execution] exaction 1831. [2] rising] risings 1831.

chappy knuckles we have often yearned to amputate, and string them up at our chamber door, to be a terror to all such unseasonable rest-breakers in future—

'Facil' and sweet, as Virgil sings, had been the 'descending' of the over-night, balmy the first sinking of the heavy head upon the pillow; but to get up, as he goes on to say,

—revocare gradus, superasque evadere ad auras—

and to get up moreover to make jokes with malice prepended—there was the 'labour', there the 'work'.

No Egyptian taskmaster ever devised a slavery like to that, our slavery. No fractious operants ever turned out for half the tyranny, which this necessity exercised upon us. Half a dozen jests in a day (bating Sundays too), why, it seems nothing! We make twice the number every day in our lives as a matter of course, and claim no Sabbatical exemptions. But then they come into our head. But when the head has to go out to them—when the mountain must go to Mahomet—

Reader, try it for once, only for one short twelvemonth.

It was not every week that a fashion of pink stockings came up; but mostly, instead of it, some rugged, untractable subject; some topic impossible to be contorted into the risible; some feature, upon which no smile could play; some flint, from which no process of ingenuity could procure a distillation. There they lay; there your appointed tale of brick-making was set before you, which you must finish, with or without straw, as it happened. The craving Dragon—*the Public*—like him in Bel's temple—must be fed; it expected its daily rations; and Daniel, and ourselves, to do us justice, did the best we could on this side bursting [1]him.

While we were wringing out coy sprightliness for the Post, and writhing under the toil of what is called 'easy writing', Bob Allen, our *quondam* schoolfellow, was tapping his impracticable brains in a like service for the 'Oracle'. Not that Robert troubled himself much about wit. If his paragraphs had a sprightly air about them, it was sufficient. He carried this nonchalance so far at last, that a matter of

[1] him.] him; 'taking pitch, and fat, and hair, and seething them together, and making lumps thereof'. 1831.

intelligence, and that no very important one, was not seldom palmed upon his employers for a good jest; for example sake—'*Walking yesterday morning casually down Snow Hill, who should we meet but Mr. Deputy Humphreys! we rejoice to add, that the worthy Deputy appeared to enjoy a good state of health. We do not remember ever to have seen him look better.*' This gentleman, so surprisingly met upon Snow Hill, from some peculiarities in gait or gesture, was a constant butt for mirth to the small paragraph-mongers of the day; and our friend thought that he might have his fling at him with the rest. We met A. in Holborn shortly after this extraordinary rencounter, which he told with tears of satisfaction in his eyes, and chuckling at the anticipated effects of its announcement next day in the paper. We did not quite comprehend where the wit of it lay at the time; nor was it easy to be detected, when the thing came out, advantaged by type and letter-press. He had better have met any thing that morning than a Common Council Man. His services were shortly after dispensed with, on the plea that his paragraphs of late had been deficient in point. The one in question, it must be owned, had an air, in the opening especially, proper to awaken curiosity; and the sentiment, or moral, wears the aspect of humanity, and good neighbourly feeling. But somehow the conclusion was not judged altogether to answer to the magnificent promise of the premises. We traced our friend's pen afterwards in the 'True Briton', the 'Star', the 'Traveller',—from all which he was successively dismissed, the Proprietors having 'no further occasion for his services'. Nothing was easier than to detect him. When wit failed, or topics ran low, there constantly appeared the following—'*It is not generally known that the three Blue Balls at the Pawnbrokers' shops are the ancient arms of Lombardy. The Lombards were the first money-brokers in Europe.*' Bob has done more to set the public right on this important point of blazonry, then the whole College of Heralds.

The appointment of a regular wit has long ceased to be a part of the economy of a Morning Paper. Editors find their own jokes, or do as well without them. Parson Este, and Topham, brought up the set custom of 'witty para-

graphs' first in the 'World'. Boaden was a reigning paragraphist in his day, and succeeded poor Allen in the Oracle. But, as we said, the fashion of jokes passes away; and it would be difficult to discover in the Biographer of Mrs. Siddons, any traces of that vivacity and fancy which charmed the whole town at the commencement of the present century. Even the prelusive delicacies of the present writer—the curt 'Astræan allusion'—would be thought pedantic, and out of date, in these days.

From the office of the Morning Post (for we may as well exhaust our Newspaper Reminiscences at once) by change of property in the paper, we were transferred, mortifying exchange! to the office of the Albion Newspaper, late Rackstrow's Museum, in Fleet-street. What a transition—from a handsome apartment, from rose-wood desks, and silver-inkstands, to an office—no office, but a *den* rather, but just redeemed from the occupation of dead monsters, of which it seemed redolent—from the centre of loyalty and fashion, to a focus of vulgarity and sedition! Here in murky closet, inadequate from its square contents to the receipt of the two bodies of Editor, and humble paragraph-maker, together at one time, sat in the discharge of his new Editorial functions (the 'Bigod' of Elia) the redoubted John Fenwick.

F., without a guinea in his pocket, and having left not many in the pockets of his friends whom he might command, had purchased (on tick doubtless) the whole and sole Editorship, Proprietorship, with all the rights and titles (such as they were worth) of the Albion, from one Lovell; of whom we know nothing, save that he had stood in the pillory for a libel on the Prince of Wales. With this hopeless concern—for it had been sinking ever since its commencement, and could now reckon upon not more than a hundred subscribers—F. resolutely determined upon pulling down the Government in the first instance, and making both our fortunes by way of corollary. For seven weeks and more did this infatuated Democrat go about borrowing seven shilling pieces, and lesser coin, to meet the daily demands of the Stamp Office, which allowed no credit to publications of that side in politics. An outcast from politer bread, we attached our small

talents to the forlorn fortunes of our friend. Our occupation now was to write treason.

Recollections of feelings—which were all that now remained from our first boyish heats kindled by the French Revolution, when if we were misled, we erred in the company of some, who are accounted very good men now—rather than any tendency at this time to Republican doctrines—assisted us in assuming a style of writing, while the paper lasted, consonant in no very under-tone to the right earnest fanaticism of F. Our cue was now to insinuate, rather than recommend, possible abdications. Blocks, axes, Whitehall tribunals, were covered with [1]flowers of so cunning a periphrasis—as Mr. Bayes says, never naming the *thing* directly—that the keen eye of an Attorney General was insufficient to detect the lurking snake among them. There were times, indeed, when we sighed for our more gentleman-like occupation under Stuart. But with change of masters it is ever change of service. Already one paragraph, and another, as we learned afterwards from a gentleman at the Treasury, had begun to be marked at that office, with a view of its being submitted at least to the attention of the proper Law Officers—when an unlucky, or rather lucky epigram from our pen, aimed at Sir J——s M——h, who was on the eve of departing for India to reap the fruits of his apostacy, as F. pronounced it, (it is hardly worth particularising), happening to offend the nice sense of Lord, or, as he then delighted to be called, Citizen Stanhope, deprived F. at once of the last hopes of a guinea from the last patron that had stuck by us; and breaking up our establishment, left us to the safe, but somewhat mortifying, neglect of the Crown Lawyers.—It was about this time, or a little earlier, that Dan. Stuart made that curious confession to us, that he had 'never deliberately walked into an Exhibition at Somerest House in his [2]life'.

[1] flowers] the flowers 1831. [2] life '.] life '.—(To be continued.) 1831.

BARRENNESS OF THE IMAGINATIVE FACULTY IN THE PRODUCTIONS OF MODERN ART

[Written in 1831 for insertion—under the heading *Peter's Net. No. III.* —in the November issue of *The Englishman's Magazine*, as a sequel to the essay afterwards entitled *Newspapers Thirty-five Years ago* (see prefatory note to this Essay, p. 745 above). Printed in part—*The Englishman's Magazine* having ceased with the October number—in *The Reflector* (Moxon's weekly), no. ii (week ending Dec. 22, 1832); and, lastly, printed under the title, *On the Total Defect of the Quality of Imagination observable in the Works of Modern British Artists. By the Author of the Essays signed 'Elia'*, in *The Athenæum*, Jan. 12, 19, 26, and Feb. 2, 1833. Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of *Last Essays*.]

[1]HOGARTH excepted, can we produce any one painter within the last fifty years, or since the humour of exhibiting began, that has treated a story *imaginatively?* By this we mean, upon whom his subject has so acted, that it has seemed to direct *him*—not to be arranged by him? Any upon whom its leading or collateral points have impressed themselves so tyrannically, that he dared not treat it otherwise, lest he should falsify a revelation? Any that has imparted to his compositions, not merely so much truth as is enough to convey a story with clearness, but that individualising property, which should keep the subject so treated distinct in feature from every other subject, however similar, and to common apprehensions almost identical; so as that we might say, this and this part could have found an appropriate place in no other picture in the world but this? Is there anything in modern art—we will not demand that it should be equal—but in any way analogous to what Titian has effected, in that wonderful bringing together of two times in the 'Ariadne', in the National Gallery? Precipitous, with his reeling Satyr rout about him, re-peopling and re-illuming suddenly the waste places, drunk with a new fury beyond the grape, Bacchus, born in fire, fire-like flings himself at the Cretan. This is the time present. With this telling of the story an artist, and no ordinary one, might remain richly proud.

[1] *The first three paragraphs appeared in* THE ATHEN., *Jan.* 12, p. 26.

Guido, in his harmonious version of it, saw no further. But from the depths of the imaginative spirit Titian has recalled past time, and laid it contributory with the present to one simultaneous effect. With the desert all ringing with the mad cymbals of his followers, made lucid with the presence and new offers of a god,—as if unconscious of Bacchus, or but idly casting her eyes as upon some unconcerning pageant—her soul undistracted from Theseus—Ariadne is still pacing the solitary shore, in as much heart-silence, and in almost the same local solitude, with which she awoke at day-break to catch the forlorn last glances of the sail that bore away the Athenian.

Here are two points miraculously co-uniting; fierce society, with the feeling of solitude still absolute; noon-day revelations, with the accidents of the dull grey dawn unquenched and lingering; the *present* Bacchus, with the *past* Ariadne; two stories, with double Time; separate, and harmonising. Had the artist made the woman one shade less indifferent to the God; still more, had she expressed a rapture at his advent, where would have been the story of the mighty desolation of the heart previous? merged in the insipid accident of a flattering offer met with a welcome acceptance. The broken heart for Theseus was not lightly to be pieced up by a God.

We have before us a fine rough print, from a picture by Raphael in the Vatican. It is the Presentation of the new-born Eve to Adam by the Almighty. A fairer mother of mankind we might imagine, and a goodlier sire perhaps of men since born. But these are matters subordinate to the conception of the *situation*, displayed in this extraordinary production. A tolerably modern artist would have been satisfied with tempering certain raptures of connubial anticipation, with a suitable acknowledgment to the Giver of the blessing, in the countenance of the first bridegroom; something like the divided attention of the child (Adam was here a child man) between the given toy, and the mother who had just blest it with the bauble. This is the obvious, the first-sight view, the superficial. An artist of a higher grade, considering the awful presence they were in, would have taken care to subtract something from the expression of the more human passion, and to heighten

the more spiritual one. This would be as much as an exhibition-goer, from the opening of Somerset House to last year's show, has been encouraged to look for. It is obvious to hint at a lower expression yet, in a picture, that for respects of drawing and colouring, might be deemed not wholly inadmissible within these art-fostering walls, in which the raptures should be as ninety-nine, the gratitude as one, or perhaps Zero ! By neither the one passion nor the other has Raphael expounded the situation of Adam. Singly upon his brow sits the absorbing sense of wonder at the created miracle. The *moment* is seized by the intuitive artist, perhaps not self-conscious of his art, in which neither of the conflicting emotions—a moment how abstracted—have had time to spring up, or to battle for indecorous mastery.—We have seen a landscape of a justly admired neoteric, in which he aimed at delineating a fiction, one of the most severely beautiful in antiquity—the gardens of the Hesperides. To do Mr. —— justice, he had painted a laudable orchard, with fitting seclusion, and a veritable dragon (of which a Polypheme by Poussin is somehow a fac-simile for the situation), looking over into the world shut out backwards, so that none but a 'still-climbing Hercules' could hope to catch a peep at the admired Ternary of Recluses. No conventual porter could keep his keys better than this custos with the 'lidless eyes'. He not only sees that none *do* intrude into that privacy, but, as clear as daylight, that none but *Hercules aut Diabolus* by any manner of means *can*. So far all is well. We have absolute solitude here or nowhere. *Ab extra* the damsels are snug enough. But here the artist's courage seems to have failed him. He began to pity his pretty charge, and, to comfort the irksomeness, has peopled their solitude with a bevy of fair attendants, maids of honour, or ladies of the bed-chamber, according to the approved etiquette at a court of the nineteenth century ; giving to the whole scene the air of a *fête champêtre*, if we will but excuse the absence of the gentlemen. This is well, and Watteauish. But what is become of the solitary mystery—the

> Daughters three,
> That sing around the golden tree ?

[1]This is not the way in which Poussin would have treated this subject.

[2]The paintings, or rather the stupendous architectural designs, of [3]a modern artist, have been urged as objections to the theory of our motto. They are of a character, we confess, to stagger it. His towered structures are of the highest order of the material sublime. Whether they were dreams, or transcripts of some elder workmanship—Assyrian ruins old—restored by this mighty artist, they satisfy our most stretched and craving conceptions of the glories of the antique world. It is a pity that they were ever peopled. On that side, the imagination of the artist halts, and appears defective. Let us examine the point of the story in the 'Belshazzar's Feast'. We will introduce it by an apposite anecdote.

The court historians of the day record, that at the first dinner given by the late King (then Prince Regent) at the Pavilion, the following characteristic frolic was played off. The guests were select and admiring; the banquet profuse and admirable; the lights lustrous and oriental; the eye was perfectly dazzled with the display of plate, among which the great gold salt-cellar, brought from the regalia in the Tower for this especial purpose, itself a tower! stood conspicuous for its magnitude. And now the Rev. * * * * the then admired court Chaplain, was proceeding with the grace, when, at a signal given, the lights were suddenly overcast, and a huge transparency was discovered, in which glittered in golden letters—

'BRIGHTON—EARTHQUAKE—SWALLOW-UP-ALIVE!'

Imagine the confusion of the guests; the Georges and garters, jewels, bracelets, moulted upon the occasion! The fans dropt, and picked up the next morning by the sly court pages! Mrs. Fitz-what's-her-name fainting, and the Countess of * * * * holding the smelling bottle, till the good-humoured Prince caused harmony to be restored by calling in fresh candles, and declaring that the whole was nothing but a pantomime *hoax*, got up by the ingenious

[1] This] Now this *Athen., Jan.* 12. [2] *This and the nine following paragraphs appeared on Jan.* 19, p. 42. [3] a modern artist] M—— *Athen., Jan.* 19.

Mr. Farley, of Covent Garden, from hints which his Royal Highness himself had furnished ! Then imagine the infinite applause that followed, the mutual rallyings, the declarations that 'they were not much frightened', of the assembled galaxy.

The point of time in the picture exactly answers to the appearance of the transparency in the anecdote. The huddle, the flutter, the bustle, the escape, the alarm, and the mock alarm ; the prettinesses heightened by consternation ; the courtier's fear which was flattery, and the lady's which was affectation ; all that we may conceive to have taken place in a mob of Brighton courtiers, sympathising with the well-acted surprise of their sovereign ; all this, and no more, is exhibited by the well-dressed lords and ladies in the Hall of Belus. Just this sort of consternation we have seen among a flock of disquieted wild geese at the report only of a gun having gone off !

But is this vulgar fright, this mere animal anxiety for the preservation of their persons,—such as we have witnessed at a theatre, when a slight alarm of fire has been given—an adequate exponent of a supernatural terror ? the way in which the finger of God, writing judgments, would have been met by the withered conscience ? There is a human fear, and a divine fear. The one is disturbed, restless, and bent upon escape. The other is bowed down, effortless, passive. When the spirit appeared before Eliphaz in the visions of the night, and the hair of his flesh stood up, was it in the thoughts of the Temanite to ring the bell of his chamber, or to call up the servants ? But let us see in the text what there is to justify all this huddle of vulgar consternation.

From the words of Daniel it appears that Belshazzar had made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. The golden and silver vessels are gorgeously enumerated, with the princes, the king's concubines, and his wives. Then follows—

'In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace ; and the *king* saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the *king's* countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints

of his loins were loosened, and his knees smote one against another.'

This is the plain text. By no hint can it be otherwise inferred, but that the appearance was solely confined to the fancy of Belshazzar, that his single brain was troubled. Not a word is spoken of its being seen by any else there present, not even by the queen herself, who merely undertakes for the interpretation of the phenomenon, as related to her, doubtless, by her husband. The lords are simply said to be astonished; *i.e.* at the trouble and the change of countenance in their sovereign. Even the prophet does not appear to have seen the scroll, which the king saw. He recalls it only, as Joseph did the Dream to the King of Egypt. 'Then was the part of the hand sent from him [the Lord], and this writing was written.' He speaks of the phantasm as past.

Then what becomes of this needless multiplication of the miracle? this message to a royal conscience, singly expressed—for it was said, 'thy kingdom is divided,'—simultaneously impressed upon the fancies of a thousand courtiers, who were implied in it neither directly nor grammatically?

But admitting the artist's own version of the story, and that the sight was seen also by the thousand courtiers—let it have been visible to all Babylon—as the knees of Belshazzar were shaken, and his countenance troubled, even so would the knees of every man in [1]Babylon, and their countenances, as of an individual man, have been troubled; bowed, bent down, so would they have remained, stupor-fixed, with no thought of struggling with that inevitable judgment.

Not all that is optically possible to be seen, is to be shown in every picture. The eye delightedly dwells upon the brilliant individualities in a 'Marriage at Cana', by Veronese, or Titian, to the very texture and colour of the wedding garments, the ring glittering upon the bride's finger, the metal and fashion of the wine pots; for at such seasons there is leisure and luxury to be curious. But in a 'day of judgment', or in a 'day of lesser horrors, yet divine', as at the impious feast of Belshazzar, the eye should see, as

[1] Babylon,] Babylon have shook, *Athen., Jan.* 19.

the actual eye of an agent or patient in the immediate scene would see, only in masses and indistinction. Not only the female attire and jewelry exposed to the critical eye of [1]the fashion, as minutely as the dresses in a lady's magazine, in [2]the criticised picture,—but perhaps the curiosities of anatomical science, and [3]studied diversities of posture, in the falling angels and sinners of Michael Angelo,—have no business in their great subjects. There was no leisure [4]of them.

[5]By a wise falsification, the great masters of painting got at their true conclusions; by not showing the actual appearances, that is, all that was to be seen at any given moment by an indifferent eye, but only what the eye might be supposed to see in the doing or suffering of some portentous action. Suppose the moment of the swallowing up of Pompeii. There they were to be seen—houses, columns, architectural proportions, differences of public and private buildings, men and women at their standing occupations, the diversified thousand postures, attitudes, dresses, in some confusion truly, but physically they were visible. But what eye saw them at that eclipsing moment, which reduces confusion to a kind of unity, and when the senses are upturned from their proprieties, when sight and hearing are a feeling only? A thousand years have passed, and we are at leisure to contemplate the weaver fixed standing at his shuttle, the baker at his oven, and to turn over with antiquarian coolness the pots and pans of Pompeii.

'Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeah, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.' Who, in reading this magnificent Hebraism, in his conception, sees aught but the heroic son of Nun, with the outstretched arm, and the greater and lesser [6]light obsequious? Doubtless there were to be seen hill and dale, and chariots and horsemen, on open plain, or winding by secret defiles, and all the circumstances and stratagems of war. But whose eyes would have been conscious of this array at the interposition of the synchronic miracle? Yet in the picture of this subject by the artist of

[1] the *omit Athen.* [2] the criticised] Mr. M.'s *Athen.* [3] studied diversities] individuality *Athen.* [4] of] for *Athen.* [5] *This and the three following paragraphs appeared on Jan.* 26, p. 57. [6] light] lights *Athen.*

the 'Belshazzar's Feast'—no ignoble work [1]either—the marshalling and landscape of the war is everything, the miracle sinks into an anecdote of the day; and the eye may 'dart through rank and file traverse' for some minutes, before it shall discover, among his armed followers, *which is Joshua!* Not modern art alone, but ancient, where only it is to be found if anywhere, can be detected erring, from defect of this imaginative faculty. The world has nothing to show of the preternatural in painting, transcending the figure of Lazarus bursting his grave-clothes, in the great picture at Angerstein's. It seems a thing between two beings. A ghastly horror at itself struggles with newly-apprehending gratitude at second life bestowed. It cannot forget that it was a ghost. It has hardly felt that it is a body. It has to tell of the world of spirits.—Was it from a feeling, that the crowd of half-impassioned by-standers, and the still more irrelevant herd of passers-by at a distance, who have not heard or but faintly have been told of the passing miracle, admirable as they are in design and hue—for it is a glorified work—do not respond adequately to the action—that the single figure of the Lazarus has been attributed to Michael Angelo, and the mighty Sebastian unfairly robbed of the fame of the greater half of the interest? Now that there were not indifferent passers-by within actual scope of the eyes of those present at the miracle, to whom the sound of it had but faintly, or not at all, reached, it would be hardihood to deny; but would they see them? or can the mind in the conception of it admit of such unconcerning objects? can it think of them at all? or what associating league to the imagination can there be between the seers, and the seers not, of a presential miracle?

Were an artist to paint upon demand a picture of a Dryad, we will ask whether, in the present low state of expectation, the patron would not, or ought not to be fully satisfied with a beautiful naked figure recumbent under wide-stretched oaks? Disseat those woods, and place the same figure among fountains, and falls of pellucid water, and you have a—Naiad! Not so in a rough print we have seen after Julio Romano, we think—for it is long since—*there*, by no process, with mere change of scene, could the

[1] either] neither *Athen.*

figure have reciprocated characters. Long, grotesque, fantastic, yet with a grace of her own, beautiful in convolution and distortion, linked to her connatural tree, co-twisting with its limbs her own, till both seemed either—these, animated branches; those, disanimated members—yet the animal and vegetable lives sufficiently kept distinct—*his* Dryad lay—an approximation of two natures, which to conceive, it must be seen; analogous to, not the same with, the delicacies of Ovidian transformations.

To the lowest subjects, and, to a superficial comprehension, the most barren, the Great Masters gave loftiness and fruitfulness. The large eyes of genius saw in the meanness of present objects their capabilities of treatment from their relations to some grand Past or Future. How has Raphael —we must still linger about the Vatican—treated the humbler craft of the ship-builder, in *his* 'Building of the Ark'? It is in that scriptural series, to which we have referred, and which, judging from some fine rough old graphic sketches of them which we possess, seem to be of a higher and more poetic grade than even the cartoons. The dim of sight are the timid and the shrinking. There is a cowardice in modern art. As the Frenchmen, of whom Coleridge's friend made the prophetic guess at Rome, from the beard and horns of the Moses of Michael Angelo collected no inferences beyond that of a He Goat and a Cornuto; so from this subject, of mere mechanic promise, it would instinctively turn away, as from one incapable of investiture with any grandeur. The dock-yards at Woolwich would object derogatory associations. The depôt at Chatham would be the mote and the beam in its intellectual eye. But not to the nautical preparations in the ship-yards of Civita Vecchia did Raphael look for instructions, when he imagined the Building of the Vessel that was to be conservatory of the wrecks of the species of drowned mankind. In the intensity of the action, he keeps ever out of sight the meanness of the operation. There is the Patriarch, in calm forethought, and with holy prescience, [1]giving directions. And there are his agents—the solitary but sufficient Three—hewing, sawing, every one with the might and earnestness of a Demiurgus; under some instinctive rather than tech-

[1] giving] giving, as guided by heaven, *Athen.*

nical guidance; giant-muscled; every one a Hercules, or liker to those Vulcanian Three, that in [1]sounding caverns under Mongibello wrought in fire—Brontes, and black Steropes, and Pyracmon. So work the workmen that should repair a world!

[2]Artists again err in the confounding of *poetic* with *pictorial subjects*. In the latter, the exterior accidents are nearly everything, the unseen qualities as nothing. Othello's colour—the infirmities and corpulence of a Sir John Falstaff—do they haunt us perpetually in the reading? or are they obtruded upon our conceptions one time for ninety-nine that we are lost in admiration at the respective moral or intellectual attributes of the character? But in a picture Othello is *always* a Blackamore; and the other only Plump Jack. Deeply corporealised, and enchained hopelessly in the grovelling fetters of externality, must be the mind, to which, in its better moments, the image of the high-souled, high-intelligenced Quixote—the errant Star of Knighthood, made more tender by eclipse—has never presented itself, divested from the unhallowed accompaniment of a Sancho, or a rabblement at the heels of Rosinante. That man has read his book by halves; he has laughed, mistaking his author's purport, which was—tears. The artist that pictures Quixote (and it is in this degrading point that he is every season held up at our Exhibitions) in the shallow hope of exciting mirth, would have joined the rabble at the heels of his starved steed. We wish not to see *that* counterfeited, which we would not have wished to see in the reality. Conscious of the heroic insight of the noble Quixote, who, on hearing that his withered person was passing, would have stepped over his threshold to gaze upon his forlorn habiliments, and the 'strange bed-fellows which misery brings a man acquainted with'? Shade of Cervantes! who in thy Second Part could put into the mouth of thy Quixote those high aspirations of a super-chivalrous gallantry, where he replies to one of the shepherdesses, apprehensive that he would spoil their pretty net-works, and inviting him to be a guest with them, in accents like these: 'Truly, fairest Lady, Actæon was not more astonished

[1] sounding] the sounding *Athen.* [2] *This and the next paragraph appeared on Feb.* 2, p. 73.

when he saw Diana bathing herself [1]at the fountain, than I have been in beholding your beauty: I commend the manner of your pastime, and thank you for your kind offers; and, if I may serve you, so I may be sure you will be obeyed, you may command me: for my profession is this, To show myself thankful, and a doer of good to all sorts of people, especially of the rank that your person shows you to be; and if those nets, as they take up but a little piece of ground, should take up the whole world, I would seek out new worlds to pass through, rather than break them: and (he adds,) that you may give credit to this my exaggeration, behold at least he that promiseth you this, is Don Quixote de la Mancha, if haply this name hath come to your hearing.' Illustrious Romancer! were the 'fine frenzies', which possessed the brain of thy own Quixote, a fit subject, as in this second Part, to be exposed to the jeers of Duennas and Serving Men? to be monstered, and shown up at the heartless banquets of great men? Was that pitiable infirmity, which in thy First Part misleads him, *always from within*, into half-ludicrous, but more than half-compassionable and admirable errors, not infliction enough from heaven, that men by studied artifices must devise and practise upon the humour, to inflame where they should soothe it? Why, Goneril would have blushed to practise upon the abdicated king at this rate, and the she-wolf Regan not have endured to play the pranks upon his fled wits, which thou hast made thy Quixote suffer in Duchesses' halls, and at the hands of that unworthy nobleman.[a]

In the First Adventures, even, it needed all the art of the most consummate artist in the Book way that the world hath yet seen, to keep up in the mind of the reader the heroic attributes of the character without relaxing; so as absolutely that they shall suffer no alloy from the debasing fellowship of the clown. If it ever obtrudes itself as a disharmony, are we inclined to laugh; or not, rather, to indulge a contrary emotion?—Cervantes, stung, perchance, by the relish with which *his* Reading Public had

[a] Yet from this Second Part, our cried-up pictures are mostly selected; the waiting-women with beards, &c.

[1] at] in *Athen.*

received the fooleries of the man, more to their palates than the generosities of the master, in the sequel let his pen run riot, lost the harmony and the balance, and sacrificed a great idea to the taste of his contemporaries. We know that in the present day the Knight has fewer admirers than the Squire. Anticipating, what did actually happen to him —as afterwards it did to his scarce inferior follower, the Author of 'Guzman de Alfarache'—that some less knowing hand would prevent him by a spurious Second Part: and judging, that it would be easier for his competitor to out-bid him in the comicalities, than in the *romance*, of his work, he abandoned his Knight, and has fairly set up the Squire for his Hero. For what else has he unsealed the eyes of Sancho; and instead of that twilight state of semi-insanity —the madness at second-hand—the contagion, caught from a stronger mind infected—that war between native cunning, and hereditary deference, with which he has hitherto accompanied his master—two for a pair almost—does he substitute a downright Knave, with open eyes, for his own ends only following a confessed Madman; and offering at one time to lay, if not actually laying, hands upon him! From the moment that Sancho loses his reverence, Don Quixote is become a—treatable lunatic. Our artists handle him accordingly.

REJOICINGS UPON THE NEW YEAR'S COMING OF AGE

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. vii, no. xxxvii, p. 5 (Jan., 1823); signed *Elia's Ghost* (see *Preface*, p. 659 above). Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

THE *Old Year* being dead, and the *New Year* coming of age, which he does, by Calendar Law, as soon as the breath is out of the old gentleman's body, nothing would serve the young spark but he must give a dinner upon the occasion, to which all the *Days* in the year were invited. The *Festivals*, whom he deputed as his stewards, were mightily taken with the notion. They had been engaged time out of mind, they said, in providing mirth and good cheer for mortals below; and it was time they should have a taste of

their own bounty. It was stiffly debated among them, whether the *Fasts* should be admitted. Some said, the appearance of such lean, starved guests, with their mortified faces, would pervert the ends of the meeting. But the objection was overruled by *Christmas Day*, who had a design upon *Ash Wednesday* (as you shall hear), and a mighty desire to see how the old Domine would behave himself in his cups. Only the *Vigils* were requested to come with their lanterns, to light the gentlefolks home at night.

All the *Days* came to their day. Covers were provided for three hundred and sixty-five guests at the principal table; with an occasional knife and fork at the side-board for the *Twenty Ninth of February*.

I should have told you, that cards of invitation had been issued. The carriers were the *Hours;* twelve little, merry, whirligig foot-pages, as you should desire to see, that went all round, and found out the persons invited well enough, with the exception of *Easter Day*, *Shrove Tuesday*, and a few such *Moveables*, who had lately shifted their quarters.

Well, they all met at last, foul *Days*, fine *Days*, all sorts of *Days*, and a rare din they made of it. There was nothing but, Hail! fellow *Day*,—well met—brother *Day*—sister *Day*, —only *Lady Day* kept a little on the aloof, and seemed somewhat scornful. Yet some said, *Twelfth Day* cut her out and out, for she came in a tiffany suit, white and gold, like a queen on a frost-cake, all royal, glittering, and *Epiphanous*. The rest came, some in green, some in white—but old *Lent and his family* were not yet out of mourning. Rainy *Days* came in, dripping; and sun-shiny *Days* helped them to change their stockings. *Wedding Day* was there in his marriage finery, a little the worse for wear. *Pay Day* came late, as he always does; and *Doomsday* sent word—he might be expected.

April Fool (as my young lord's jester) took upon himself to marshal the guests, and wild work he made of it. It would have posed old Erra Pater to have found out any given *Day* in the year, to erect a scheme upon—good *Days*, bad *Days*, were so shuffled together, to the confounding of all sober horoscopy.

He had stuck the *Twenty First of June* next to the *Twenty*

Second of December, and the former looked like a Maypole siding a marrow-bone. *Ash Wednesday* got wedged in (as was concerted) betwixt *Christmas* and *Lord Mayor's Days*. Lord! how he laid about him! Nothing but barons of beef and turkeys would go down with him—to the great greasing and detriment of his new sackcloth bib and tucker. And still *Christmas Day* was at his elbow, plying him with the wassail-bowl, till he roared, and hiccup'd, and protested there was no faith in dried ling, but commended it to the devil for a sour, windy, acrimonious, censorious, hy-po-crit-crit-critical mess, and no dish for a gentleman. Then he dipt his fist into the middle of the great custard that stood before his *left-hand neighbour*, and daubed his hungry beard all over with it, till you would have taken him for the *Last Day in December*, it so hung in icicles.

At another part of the table, *Shrove Tuesday* was helping the *Second of September* to some cock broth,—which courtesy the latter returned with the delicate thigh of a hen pheasant —so there was no love lost for that matter. The *Last of Lent* was spunging upon *Shrovetide's* pancakes; which *April Fool* perceiving, told him he did well, for pancakes were proper to a *good fry-day*.

In another part, a hubbub arose about the *Thirtieth of January*, who, it seems, being a sour puritanic character, that thought nobody's meat good or sanctified enough for him, had smuggled into the room a [1]calf's head, which he had had cooked at home for that purpose, thinking to feast thereon incontinently; but as it lay in the dish, *March Manyweathers*, who is a very fine lady, and subject to the megrims, [2]screamed out there was a 'human head in the platter', and raved about Herodias' daughter to that degree, that the obnoxious viand was obliged to be removed; nor did she recover her stomach till she had gulped down a *Restorative*, confected of *Oak Apple*, which the merry *Twenty Ninth of May* always carries about with him for that purpose.

The King's health[a] being called for after this, a notable dispute arose between the *Twelfth of August* (a zealous old

[a] The late King [1833].

[1] calf's] calves' 1823. [2] screamed] suddenly screamed 1823.

Whig gentlewoman,) and the *Twenty Third of April* (a new-fangled lady of the Tory stamp,) as to which of them should have the honour to propose it. *August* grew hot upon the matter, affirming time out of mind the prescriptive right to have lain with her, till her rival had basely supplanted her; whom she represented as little better than a *kept* mistress, who went about in *fine clothes*, while she (the legitimate BIRTHDAY) had scarcely a rag, &c.

April Fool, being made mediator, confirmed the right in the strongest form of words to the appellant, but decided for peace' sake that the exercise of it should remain with the present possessor. At the same time, he slily rounded the first lady in the ear, that an action might lie against the Crown for *bi-geny*.

It beginning to grow a little duskish, *Candlemas* lustily bawled out for lights, which was opposed by all the *Days*, who protested against burning daylight. Then fair water was handed round in silver ewers, and the *same lady* was observed to take an unusual time in *Washing* herself.

May Day, with that sweetness which is peculiar to her, in a neat speech proposing the health of the founder, crowned her goblet (and by her example the rest of the company) with garlands. This being done, the lordly *New Year* from the upper end of the table, in a cordial but somewhat lofty tone, returned thanks. He felt proud on an occasion of meeting so many of his worthy father's late tenants, promised to improve their farms, and at the same time to abate (if any thing was found unreasonable) in their rents.

At the mention of this, the four *Quarter Days* involuntarily looked at each other, and smiled; *April Fool* whistled to an old tune of 'New Brooms'; and a surly old rebel at the farther end of the table (who was discovered to be no other than the *Fifth of November*,) muttered out, distinctly enough to be heard by the whole company, words to this effect, that, 'when the old one is gone, he is a fool that looks for a better.' Which rudeness of his, the guests resenting, unanimously voted his expulsion; and the male-content was thrust out neck and heels into the cellar, as the properest place for such a *boutefeu* and firebrand as he had shown himself to be.

Order being restored—the young lord (who to say truth,

had been a little ruffled, and put beside his oratory) in as few, and yet as obliging words as possible, assured them of entire welcome; and, with a graceful turn, singling out poor *Twenty Ninth of February*, that had sate all this while mumchance at the side-board, begged to couple his health with that of the good company before him—which he drank accordingly; observing, that he had not seen his honest face any time these four years, with a number of endearing expressions besides. At the same time, removing the solitary *Day* from the forlorn seat which had been assigned him, he stationed him at his own board, somewhere between the *Greek Calends* and *Latter Lammas*.

Ash Wednesday, being now called upon for a song, with his eyes fast stuck in his head, and as well as the Canary he had swallowed would give him leave, struck up a Carol, which *Christmas Day* had taught him for the nonce; and was followed by the latter, who gave 'Miserere' in fine style, hitting off the mumping notes and lengthened drawl of *Old Mortification* with infinite humour. *April Fool* swore they had exchanged conditions: but *Good Friday* was observed to look extremely grave; and *Sunday* held her fan before her face, that she might not be seen to smile.

Shrove-tide, *Lord Mayor's Day*, and *April Fool*, next joined in a glee—

Which is the properest day to drink?

in which all the *Days* chiming in, made a merry burden.

They next fell to quibbles and conundrums. The question being proposed, who had the greatest number of followers—the *Quarter Days* said, there could be no question as to that; for they had all the creditors in the world dogging their heels. But *April Fool* gave it in favour of the *Forty Days before Easter*; because the debtors in all cases outnumbered the creditors, and they kept *lent* all the year.

All this while, *Valentine's Day* kept courting pretty *May*, who sate next him, slipping amorous *billets-doux* under the table, till the *Dog Days* (who are naturally of a warm constitution) began to be jealous, and to bark and rage exceedingly. *April Fool*, who likes a bit of sport above measure, and had some pretensions to the lady besides, as being but a cousin once removed,—clapped and halloo'd

them on; and as fast as their indignation cooled, those mad wags, the *Ember Days*, were at it with their bellows, to blow it into a flame; and all was in a ferment: till old Madam *Septuagesima* (who boasts herself the *Mother of the Days*) wisely diverted the conversation with a tedious tale of the lovers which she could reckon when she was young; and of one Master *Rogation Day* in particular, who was for ever putting the *question* to her; but she kept him at a distance, as the chronicle would tell—by which I apprehend she meant the Almanack. Then she rambled on to the *Days that were gone*, the *good old Days*, and so to the *Days before the Flood*—which plainly showed her old head to be little better than crazed and doited.

Day being ended, the *Days* called for their cloaks and great coats, and took their leaves. *Lord Mayor's Day* went off in a mist, as usual; *Shortest Day* in a deep black Fog, that wrapt the little gentleman all round like a hedge-hog. Two *Vigils*—so watchmen are called in heaven—saw *Christmas Day* safe home—they had been used to the business before. Another *Vigil*—a stout, sturdy patrole, called the *Eve of St. Christopher*—seeing *Ash Wednesday* in a condition little better than he should be—e'en whipt him over his shoulders, pick-a-back fashion, and *Old Mortification* went floating home, singing—

On the bat's back do I fly,

and a number of old snatches besides, between drunk and sober, but very few Aves or Penitentiaries (you may believe me) were among them. *Longest Day* set off westward in beautiful crimson and gold—the rest, some in one fashion, some in another; but *Valentine* and pretty *May* took their departure together in one of the prettiest silvery twilights a Lover's Day could wish to set in.

THE WEDDING

[Printed in *The London Magazine, New Series*, vol. ii, no. vi, p. 217 (June, 1825). Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

I DO not know when I have been better pleased than at being invited last week to be present at the wedding of

a friend's daughter. I like to make one at these ceremonies, which to us old people give back our youth in a manner, and restore our gayest season, in remembrance of our own success, or the regrets, scarcely less tender, of our own youthful disappointments, in this point of a settlement. On these occasions I am sure to be in good-humour for a week or two after, and enjoy a reflected honey-moon. Being without a family, I am flattered with these temporary adoptions into a friend's family; I feel a sort of cousin-hood, or uncleship, for the season; I am inducted into degrees of affinity; and, in the participated socialities of the little community, I lay down for a brief while my solitary bachelorship. I carry this humour so far, that I take it unkindly to be left out, even when a funeral is going on in the house of a dear friend. But to my subject.——

The union itself had been long settled, but its celebration had been hitherto deferred, to an almost unreasonable state of suspense in the lovers, by some invincible prejudices which the bride's father had unhappily contracted upon the subject of the too early marriages of females. He has been lecturing any time these five years—for to that length the courtship has been protracted—upon the propriety of putting off the solemnity, till the lady should have completed her five-and-twentieth year. We all began to be afraid that a suit, which as yet had abated of none of its ardours, might at last be lingered on, till passion had come to cool, and love go out in the experiment. But a little wheedling on the part of his wife, who was by no means a party to these overstrained notions, joined to some serious expostulations on that of his friends, who, from the growing infirmities of the old gentleman, could not promise ourselves many years' enjoyment of his company, and were anxious to bring matters to a conclusion during his life-time, at length prevailed; and on Monday last the daughter of my old friend, Admiral ——, having attained the *womanly* age of nineteen, was conducted to the church by her pleasant cousin J——, who told some few years older.

Before the youthful part of my female readers express their indignation at the abominable loss of time occasioned to the lovers by the preposterous notions of my old friend, they will do well to consider the reluctance which a fond

parent naturally feels at parting with his child. To this unwillingness, I believe, in most cases may be traced the difference of opinion on this point between child and parent, whatever pretences of interest or prudence may be held out to cover it. The hard-heartedness of fathers is a fine theme for romance writers, a sure and moving topic ; but is there not something untender, to say no more of it, in the hurry which a beloved child is sometimes in to tear herself from the parental stock, and commit herself to strange graftings ? The case is heightened where the lady, as in the present instance, happens to be an only child. I do not understand these matters experimentally, but I can make a shrewd guess at the wounded pride of a parent upon these occasions. It is no new observation, I believe, that a lover in most cases has no rival so much to be feared as the father. Certainly there is a jealousy in *unparallel subjects*, which is little less heart-rending than the passion which we more strictly christen by that name. Mother's scruples are more easily got over ; for this reason, I suppose, that the protection transferred to a husband is less a derogation and a loss to their authority than to the paternal. Mothers, besides, have a trembling foresight, which paints the inconveniences (impossible to be conceived in the same degree by the other parent) of a life of forlorn celibacy, which the refusal of a tolerable match may entail upon their child. Mothers' instinct is a surer guide here, than the cold reasonings of a father on such a topic. To this instinct may be imputed, and by it alone may be excused, the unbeseeming artifices, by which some wives push on the matrimonial projects of their daughters, which the husband, however approving, shall entertain with comparative indifference. A little shamelessness on this head is pardonable. With this explanation, forwardness becomes a grace, and maternal importunity receives the name of a virtue.—But the parson stays, while I preposterously assume his office ; I am preaching while the bride is on the threshold.

Nor let any of my female readers suppose that the sage reflections which have just escaped me have the obliquest tendency of application to the young lady, who, it will be seen, is about to venture upon a change in her condition, at a *mature and competent age*, and not without the fullest

approbation of [1]all parties. I only deprecate *very hasty marriages.*

It had been fixed that the ceremony should be gone through at an early hour, to give time for a little *déjeuné* afterwards, to which a select party of friends had been invited. We were in church a little before the clock struck eight.

Nothing could be more judicious or graceful than the dress of the bride-maids—the three charming Miss Foresters —on this morning. To give the bride an opportunity of shining singly, they had come habited all in green. I am ill at describing female apparel; but, while *she* stood at the altar in vestments white and candid as her thoughts, a sacrificial whiteness, *they* assisted in robes, such as [2]might become Diana's nymphs—Foresters indeed—as such who had not yet come to the resolution of putting off cold virginity. These young maids, not being so blest as to have a mother living, I am told, keep single for their father's sake, and live altogether so happy with their remaining parent, that the hearts of their lovers are [3]ever broken with the prospect (so inauspicious to their hopes) of such uninterrupted and provoking home-comfort. Gallant girls! each a victim worthy of Iphigenia!

I do not know what business I have to be present in solemn places. I cannot divest me of an unseasonable disposition to levity upon the most awful occasions. I was never cut out for a public functionary. Ceremony and I have long shaken hands; but I could not resist the importunities of the young lady's father, whose gout unhappily confined him at home, to act as parent on this occasion, and *give away the bride.* Something ludicrous occurred to me at this most serious of all moments—a sense of my unfitness to have the disposal, even in imagination, of the sweet young creature beside me. I fear I was betrayed to some lightness, for the awful eye of the parson—and the rector's eye of Saint Mildred's in the Poultry is no trifle of a rebuke —was upon me in an instant, souring my incipient jest to the tristful severities of a funeral.

This was the only misbehaviour which I can plead to

[1] all parties] both parents 1825. [2] might] might have 1825. [3] ever] even 1825.

upon this solemn occasion, unless what was objected to me after the ceremony by one of the handsome [1]Miss T——s, be accounted a solecism. She was pleased to say that she had never seen a gentleman before me give away a bride in black. Now black has been my ordinary apparel so long—indeed I take it to be the proper costume of an author—the stage sanctions it—that to have appeared in some lighter [2]colour would have raised more mirth at my expense, than the anomaly had created censure. But I could perceive that the bride's mother, and some elderly ladies present (God bless them!), would have been well content, if I had come in any other colour than that. But I got over the omen by a lucky apologue, which I remembered out of Pilpay, or some Indian author, of all the birds being invited to the linnets' wedding, at which, when all the rest came in their gayest feathers, the raven alone apologised for his cloak because 'he had no other'. This tolerably reconciled the elders. But with the young people all was merriment, and shaking of hands, and congratulations, and kissing away the bride's tears, and kissings from her in return, till a young lady, who assumed some experience in these matters, having worn the nuptial bands some four or five weeks longer than her friend, rescued her, archly observing, with half an eye upon the bridegroom, that at this rate she would have 'none left'.

My friend the admiral was in fine wig and buckle on this occasion—a striking contrast to his usual neglect of personal appearance. He did not once shove up his borrowed locks (his custom ever at his morning studies) to betray the few grey stragglers of his own beneath them. He wore an aspect of thoughtful satisfaction. I trembled for the hour, which at length approached, when after a protracted *breakfast* of three hours—if stores of cold fowls, tongues, hams, botargoes, dried fruits, wines, cordials, &c., can deserve so meagre an appellation—the coach was announced, which was come to carry off the bride and bridegroom for a season, as custom has sensibly ordained, into the country; upon which design, wishing them a felicitous journey, let us return to the assembled guests.

[1] T——s] Turners 1825. [2] colour would] colours—a pea-green coat, for instance, like the bridegroom's—would 1825.

> As when a well-graced actor leaves the stage,
> The eyes of men
> Are idly bent on him that enters next,

so idly did we bend our eyes upon one another, when the chief performers in the morning's pageant had vanished. None told his tale. None sipt her glass. The poor Admiral made an effort—it was not much. I had anticipated so far. Even the infinity of full satisfaction, that had betrayed itself through the prim looks and quiet deportment of his lady, began to wane into something of misgiving. No one knew whether to take their leaves or stay. We seemed assembled upon a silly occasion. In this crisis, betwixt tarrying and departure, I must do justice to a foolish talent of mine, which had otherwise like to have brought me into disgrace in the fore-part of the day; I mean a power, in any emergency, of thinking and giving vent to all manner of strange nonsense. In this awkward dilemma I found it sovereign. I rattled off some of my most excellent absurdities. All were willing to be relieved, at any expense of reason, from the pressure of the intolerable vacuum which had succeeded to the morning bustle. By this means I was fortunate in keeping together the better part of the company to a late hour: and a rubber of whist (the Admiral's favourite game) with some rare strokes of chance as well as skill, which came opportunely on his side—lengthened out till midnight—dismissed the old gentleman at last to his bed with comparatively easy spirits.

I have been at my old friend's various times since. I do not know a visiting place where every guest is so perfectly at his ease; nowhere, where harmony is so strangely the result of confusion. Every body is at cross purposes, yet the effect is so much better than uniformity. Contradictory orders; servants pulling one way; master and mistress driving some other, yet both diverse; visitors huddled up in corners; chairs unsymmetrised: candles disposed by chance; meals at odd hours, tea and supper at once, or the latter preceding the former; the host and the guest conferring, yet each upon a different topic, each understanding himself, neither trying to understand or hear the other; draughts and politics, chess and political economy, cards and conversation on nautical matters, going on at

once, without the hope, or indeed the wish, of distinguishing them, make it altogether the most perfect *concordia discors* you shall meet with. Yet somehow the old house is not quite what it should be. The Admiral still enjoys his pipe, but he has no Miss Emily to fill it for him. The instrument stands where it stood, but she is gone, whose delicate touch could sometimes for a short minute appease the warring elements. He has learnt, as Marvel expresses it, to ' make his destiny his choice '. He bears bravely up, but he does not come out with his flashes of wild wit so thick as formerly. His sea songs seldomer escape him. His wife, too, looks as if she wanted some younger body to scold and set to rights. We all miss a junior presence. It is wonderful how one young maiden freshens up, and keeps green, the paternal roof. Old and young seem to have an interest in her, so long as she is not absolutely disposed of. The youthfulness of the house is flown. Emily is married.

THE CHILD ANGEL

A Dream

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. vii, no. xlii, p. 677 (June, 1823). Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

I CHANCED upon the prettiest, oddest, fantastical thing of a dream the other night, that you shall hear of. I had been reading the ' Loves of the Angels ', and went to bed with my head full of speculations, suggested by that extraordinary legend. It had given birth to innumerable conjectures ; and, I remember, the last waking thought, which I gave expression to on my pillow, was a sort of wonder, ' what could come of it.'

I was suddenly transported, how or whither I could scarcely make out—but to some celestial region. It was not the real heavens neither—not the downright Bible heaven—but a kind of fairyland heaven, about which a poor human fancy may have leave to sport and air itself, I will hope, without presumption.

Methought—what wild things dreams are !—I was present —at what would you imagine ?—at an angel's gossiping.

Whence it came, or how it came, or who bid it come, or whether it came purely of its own head, neither you nor I know—but there lay, sure enough, wrapped in its little cloudy swaddling bands—a Child Angel.

Sun-threads—filmy beams—ran through the celestial napery of what seemed its princely cradle. All the winged orders hovered round, watching when the new-born should open its yet closed eyes ; which, when it did, first one, and then the other—with a solicitude and apprehension, yet not such as, stained with fear, dims the expanding eye-lids of mortal infants, but as if to explore its path in those its unhereditary palaces—what an inextinguishable titter that time spared not celestial visages ! Nor wanted there to my seeming—O the inexplicable simpleness of dreams !—bowls of that cheering nectar,

—which mortals *caudle* call below—

Nor were wanting faces of female ministrants,—stricken in years, as it might seem,—so dexterous were those heavenly attendants to counterfeit kindly similitudes of earth, to greet with terrestrial child-rites the young *present*, which earth had made to heaven.

Then were celestial harpings heard, not in full symphony as those by which the spheres are tutored ; but, as loudest instruments on earth speak oftentimes, muffled ; so to accommodate their sound the better to the weak ears of the imperfect-born. And, with the noise of those subdued soundings, the Angelet sprang forth, fluttering its rudiments of pinions—but forthwith flagged and was recovered into the arms of those full-winged angels. And a wonder it was to see how, as years went round in heaven—a year in dreams is as a day—continually its white shoulders put forth buds of wings, but, wanting the perfect angelic nutriment, anon was shorn of its aspiring, and fell fluttering—still caught by angel hands—for ever to put forth shoots, and to fall fluttering, because its birth was not of the unmixed vigour of heaven.

And a name was given to the Babe Angel, and it was to be called *Ge-Urania*, because its production was of earth and heaven.

And it could not taste of death, by reason of its adoption

into immortal palaces : but it was to know weakness, and reliance, and the shadow of human imbecility ; and it went with a lame gait; but in its goings it exceeded all mortal children in grace and swiftness. Then pity first sprang up in angelic bosoms ; and yearnings (like the human) touched them at the sight of the immortal lame one.

And with pain did then first those Intuitive Essences, with pain and strife to their natures (not grief), put back their bright intelligences, and reduce their ethereal minds, schooling them to degrees and slower processes, so to adapt their lessons to the gradual illumination (as must needs be) of the half-earth-born ; and what intuitive notices they could not repel (by reason that their nature is, to know all things at once), the half-heavenly novice, by the better part of its nature, aspired to receive into its understanding ; so that Humility and Aspiration went on even-paced in the instruction of the glorious Amphibium.

But, by reason that Mature Humanity is too gross to breathe the air of that super-subtile region, its portion was, and is, to be a child for ever.

And because the human part of it might not press into the heart and inwards of the palace of its adoption, those full-natured angels tended it by turns in the purlieus of the palace, where were shady groves and rivulets, like this green earth from which it came : so Love, with Voluntary Humility, waited upon the entertainment of the new-adopted.

And myriads of years rolled round (in dreams Time is nothing), and still it kept, and is to keep, perpetual childhood, and is the Tutelar Genius of Childhood upon earth, and still goes lame and lovely.

By the banks of the river Pison is seen, lone-sitting by the grave of the terrestrial [1]Adah, whom the angel Nadir loved, a Child ; but not the same which I saw in heaven. A [2]mournful hue overcasts its lineaments ; nevertheless, a correspondency is between the child by the grave, and that celestial orphan, whom I saw above ; and the dimness of the grief upon the heavenly, is as a shadow or emblem of that which stains the beauty of the terrestrial. And this correspondency is not to be understood but by dreams.

[1] Adah] Mirzah 1823. [2] mournful] pensive 1823.

And in the archives of heaven I had grace to read, how that once the angel Nadir, being exiled from his place for mortal passion, upspringing on the wings of parental love (such power had parental love for a moment to suspend the else-irrevocable law) appeared for a brief instant in his station; and, depositing a wondrous Birth, straightway disappeared, and the palaces knew him no more. And this charge was the self-same Babe, who goeth lame and lovely —but [1]Adah sleepeth by the river Pison.

A DEATH-BED

In a Letter to R. H. Esq. of B——

[Printed in Hone's *Table Book*, vol. i, cols. 425–6; signed *L.*, and dated *London, February* 10, 1827. Composed originally as a letter (dated Jan. 20, 1827) addressed to H. Crabb Robinson of Bury St. Edmund's on the death of Randal Norris, sub-treasurer of the Inner Temple. Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833, 1st ed., but replaced by the *Confessions of a Drunkard* (p. 168 above) in the second edition, 1835. Text of 1833.]

I called upon you this morning, and found that you were gone to visit a dying friend. I had been upon a like errand. Poor [2]N. R. has lain dying now for almost a week; such is the penalty we pay for having enjoyed [3]through life a strong constitution. Whether he knew me or not, I know not, or whether he saw me through his poor glazed eyes; but the group I saw about him I shall not forget. Upon the bed, or about it, were assembled his Wife, [4]their two Daughters, and poor deaf Robert, looking doubly stupified. There they were, and seemed to have been sitting all the week. I could only reach out a hand to Mrs. [5]R. Speaking was impossible in that mute chamber. By this time [6]it must be all over with him. In him I have a loss the world cannot make up. He was my friend, and my father's friend, [7]for all the life that I can remember.

[1] Adah] Mirzah 1823. [2] N. R. has lain] Norris has been lying *Jan.*, 1827. [3] through life *omit Jan.*, 1827. [4] , their . . . Robert] and two daughters, and poor deaf Richard, his son, *Jan.*, 1827. [5] R.] Norris *Jan.*, 1827. [6] it must be] I hope it is *Jan.*, 1827. [7] for *omit Jan.*, 1827.

I seem to have made foolish friendships [1]since. Those are the friendships, which [2]outlast a second generation. Old as I am [3]getting, in his eyes I was still the child he [4]knew me. To the last he called me [5]Jemmy. I have none to call me [5]Jemmy now. He was the last link that bound me to [6]B——. You are but of yesterday. In him [7]I seem to have lost the old plainness of manners and singleness of heart. [8]Lettered he was not ; his reading scarcely exceeded the Obituary of the old Gentleman's Magazine, to which he has never failed of having recourse for these last fifty years. Yet there was the pride of literature about him from that slender perusal ; and moreover from his office of archive-keeper to your ancient city, in which he must needs pick up some equivocal Latin ; which, among his less literary friends, assumed the air of a very pleasant pedantry. Can I forget the erudite look with which, having tried to puzzle out the text of a Black-lettered Chaucer in your Corporation Library, to which he was a sort of Librarian, he gave it up with this consolatory reflection—' Jemmy,' said he, ' I do not know what you find in these very old books, but I observe, there is a deal of very indifferent spelling in them.' His jokes (for he had some) are ended ; but they were old Perennials, staple, and always as good as new. He had one Song, that spake of the ' flat bottoms of our foes coming over in darkness ', and alluded to a threatened Invasion, many years since blown over ; this he reserved to be sung on Christmas Night, which we always passed with him, and he sang it with the freshness of an impending event. How his eyes would sparkle when he came to the passage :—

> We'll still make 'em run, and we'll still make 'em sweat,
> In spite of the devil and Brussels' Gazette !

What is the Brussels' Gazette now ? I cry, while I endite these trifles. His poor girls who are, I believe, compact of solid goodness, will have to receive their afflicted mother at an unsuccessful home in a petty village in ——shire, where for years they have been struggling to raise a Girls'

[1] since] ever since *Jan.* 1827. [2] outlast] outlive *Jan.*, 1827.
[3] getting] waxing *Jan.*, 1827. [4] knew] first knew *Jan.*, 1827.
[5] Jemmy] Charley *Jan.*, 1827. [6] B——] the Temple, *Jan.*, 1827.
[7] I . . . lost] seem to have died *Jan.*, 1827. [8] *For the remainder of the letter of Jan.*, 1827 *see Editor's Notes.*

School with no effect. Poor deaf Robert (and the less hopeful for being so) is thrown upon a deaf world, without the comfort to his father on his death-bed of knowing him provided for. They are left almost provisionless. Some life assurance there is; but, I fear, not exceeding ——. Their hopes must be from your Corporation, which their father has served for fifty years. Who or what are your Leading Members now, I know not. Is there any, to whom without impertinence, you can represent the true circumstances of the family? You cannot say good enough of poor R., and his poor wife. Oblige me and the dead, if you can.

OLD CHINA

[Printed in *The London Magazine*, vol. vii, no. xxxix, p. 269 (March, 1823). Collected in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. Text of 1833.]

I HAVE an almost feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see any great house, I inquire for the china-closet, and next for the picture gallery. I cannot defend the order of preference, but by saying, that we have all some taste or other, of too ancient a date to admit of our remembering distinctly that it was an acquired one. I can call to mind the first play, and the first exhibition, that I was taken to; but I am not conscious of a time when china jars and saucers were introduced into my imagination.

I had no repugnance then—why should I now have?—to those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective—a china tea-cup.

I like to see my old friends—whom distance cannot diminish—figuring up in the air (so they appear to our optics), yet on *terra firma* still—for so we must in courtesy interpret that speck of deeper blue, which the decorous artist, to prevent absurdity, has made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions.

Here is a young and courtly Mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver—two miles off. See how distance

seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another—for likeness is identity on tea-cups—is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the hither side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowery mead—a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream!

Farther on—if far or near can be predicated of their world—see horses, trees, pagodas, dancing the hays.

Here—a cow and rabbit couchant, and co-extensive—so objects show, seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay.

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson (which we are old fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon) some of these *speciosa miracula* upon a set of extraordinary old blue china (a recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using; and could not help remarking, how favourable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort—when a passing sentiment seemed to over-shade the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget.

'I wish the good old times would come again', she said, 'when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean, that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state;'—so she was pleased to ramble on,—'in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and, O! how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times!) we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it.

'Do you remember the brown suit, which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so thread-bare—and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent-garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our

minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late—and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures—and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome—and when you presented it to me—and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (*collating* you called it)—and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till day-break—was there no pleasure in being a poor man ? or can those neat black clothes which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical, give you half the honest vanity, with which you flaunted it about in that over-worn suit—your old corbeau —for four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty sum of fifteen—or sixteen shillings was it ?—a great affair we thought it then—which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy any book that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchases now.

'When you came home with twenty apologies for laying out a less number of shillings upon that print after Lionardo, which we christened the "Lady Blanch"; when you looked at the purchase, and thought of the money—and thought of the money, and looked again at the picture—was there no pleasure in being a poor man ? Now, you have nothing to do but to walk into [1]Colnaghi's, and buy a wilderness of Lionardos. Yet do you ?

'Then, do you remember our pleasant walks to Enfield, and Potter's Bar, and Waltham, when we had a holyday—holydays, and all other fun, are gone, now we are rich—and the little hand-basket in which I used to deposit our day's fare of savoury cold lamb and salad—and how you would pry about at noon-tide for some decent house, where we might go in, and produce our store—only paying for the ale that you must call for—and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a table-cloth—and wish for such another honest hostess, as

[1] Colnaghi's] Colnaghi's (as W—— calls it) 1823.

Izaak Walton has described many a one on the pleasant banks of the Lea, when he went a fishing—and sometimes they would prove obliging enough, and sometimes they would look grudgingly upon us—but we had cheerful looks still for one another, and would eat our plain food savorily, scarcely grudging Piscator his Trout Hall ? Now, when we go out a day's pleasuring, which is seldom moreover, we *ride* part of the way—and go into a fine inn, and order the best of dinners, never debating the expense—which, after all, never has half the relish of those chance country snaps, when we were at the mercy of uncertain usage, and a precarious welcome.

'You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the [1]pit. Do you remember where it was we used to sit, when we saw the Battle of Hexham, and the Surrender of Calais, and Bannister and Mrs. Bland in the Children in the Wood—when we squeezed out our shillings a-piece to sit three or four times in a season in the one-shilling gallery—where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me—and more strongly I felt obligation to you for having brought me—and the pleasure was the better for a little shame—and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our place in the house, or what mattered it where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with Rosalind in Arden, or with Viola at the Court of Illyria ? You used to say, that the gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially—that the relish of such exhibitions must be in proportion to the infrequency of going—that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged to attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage—because a word lost would have been a chasm, which it was impossible for them to fill up. With such reflections we consoled our pride then—and I appeal to you, whether, as a woman, I met generally with less attention and accommodation, than I have done since in more expensive situations in the house ? The getting in indeed, and the crowding up those inconvenient staircases, was bad enough,—but there was still a law of civility to women recognised to quite as great an extent as we ever found in the other passages—and how a little difficulty over-

[1] pit.] pit or boxes. 1823.

come heightened the snug seat, and the play, afterwards! Now we can only pay our money, and walk in. You cannot see, you say, in the galleries now. I am sure we saw, and heard too, well enough then—but sight, and all, I think, is gone with our poverty.

'There was pleasure in eating strawberries, before they became quite common—in the first dish of peas, while they were yet dear—to have them for a nice supper, a treat. What treat can we have now? If we were to treat ourselves now—that is, to have dainties a little above our means, it would be selfish and wicked. It is the very little more that we allow ourselves beyond what the actual poor can get at, that makes what I call a treat—when two people living together, as we have done, now and then indulge themselves in a cheap luxury, which both like; while each apologises, and is willing to take both halves of the blame to his single share. I see no harm in people making much of themselves in that sense of the word. It may give them a hint how to make much of others. But now—what I mean by the word—we never do make much of ourselves. None but the poor can do it. I do not mean the veriest poor of all, but persons as we were, just above poverty.

'I know what you were going to say, that it is mighty pleasant at the end of the year to make all meet—and much ado we used to have every Thirty-first Night of December to account for our exceedings—many a long face did you make over your puzzled accounts, and in contriving to make it out how we had spent so much—or that we had not spent so much—or that it was impossible we should spend so much next year—and still we found our slender capital decreasing—but then, betwixt ways, and projects, and compromises of one sort or another, and talk of curtailing this charge, and doing without that for the future—and the hope that youth brings, and laughing spirits (in which you were never poor till now,) we pocketed up our loss, and in conclusion, with "lusty brimmers" (as you used to quote it out of *hearty cheerful Mr. Cotton*, as you called him), we used to welcome in the "coming guest". Now we have no reckoning at all at the end of [1]the old year—

[1] the] an 1823.

no flattering promises about the new year doing better for us.'

Bridget is so sparing of her speech on most occasions, that when she gets into a rhetorical vein, I am careful how I interrupt it. I could not help, however, smiling at the phantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up out of a clear income of poor — hundred pounds a year. 'It is true we were happier when we were poorer, but we were also younger, my cousin. I am afraid we must put up with the excess, for if we were to shake the superflux into the sea, we should not much mend ourselves. That we had much to struggle with, as we grew up together, we have reason to be most thankful. It strengthened, and knit our compact closer. We could never have been what we have been to each other, if we had always had the sufficiency which you now complain of. The resisting power—those natural dilations of the youthful spirit, which circumstances cannot straiten—with us are long since passed away. Competence to age is supplementary youth; a sorry supplement indeed, but I fear the best that is to be had. We must ride, where we formerly walked: live better, and lie softer—and shall be wise to do so—than we had means to do in those good old days you speak of. Yet could those days return—could you and I once more walk our thirty miles a-day—could Bannister and Mrs. Bland again be young, and you and I be young to see them—could the good old one-shilling gallery days return—they are dreams, my cousin, now—but could you and I at this moment, instead of this quiet argument, by our well-carpeted fire-side, sitting on this luxurious sofa—be once more struggling up those inconvenient stair-cases, pushed about, and squeezed, and elbowed by the poorest rabble of poor gallery scramblers—could I once more hear those anxious shrieks of yours—and the delicious *Thank God, we are safe*, which always followed when the topmost stair, conquered, let in the first light of the whole cheerful theatre down beneath us—I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more wealth in than Crœsus had, or the great Jew R—— is supposed to have, to purchase it. And now do just look at that merry little Chinese waiter holding an umbrella,

big enough for a bed-tester, over the head of that pretty insipid half-Madonna-ish chit of a lady in that very blue summer-house.'

POPULAR FALLACIES

I.—THAT A BULLY IS ALWAYS A COWARD

[This and the eight following articles appeared in *The New Monthly Magazine*, Jan., 1826, pp. 25–9, and were collected, with the remaining seven here printed, in *The Last Essays of Elia*, 1833. See *The Genteel Style in Writing*, *Sanity of True Genius*, and *That a Deformed Person is a Lord*, pp. 719, 704, and 367 above. Text of 1833.]

This axiom contains a principle of compensation, which disposes us to admit the truth of it. But there is no safe trusting to dictionaries and definitions. We should more willingly fall in with this popular language, if we did not find *brutality* sometimes awkwardly coupled with *valour* in the same vocabulary. The comic writers, with their poetical justice, have contributed not a little to mislead us upon this point. To see a hectoring fellow exposed and beaten upon the stage, has something in it wonderfully diverting. Some people's share of animal spirits is notoriously low and defective. It has not strength to raise a vapour, or furnish out the wind of a tolerable bluster. These love to be told that huffing is no part of valour. The truest courage with them is that which is the least noisy and obtrusive. But confront one of these silent heroes with the swaggerer of real life, and his confidence in the theory quickly vanishes. Pretensions do not uniformly bespeak non-performance. A modest inoffensive deportment does not necessarily imply [1]valour ; neither does the absence of it justify us in denying that quality. Hickman wanted modesty—we do not mean *him* of Clarissa—but who ever doubted his [2]courage ? Even the poets—upon whom this equitable distribution of qualities should be most binding—have thought it agreeable to nature to depart from the rule upon occasion. Harapha, in the ' Agonistes ', is indeed a bully upon the received notions. Milton has made him at once a blusterer, a giant, and a dastard. But Almanzor, in Dryden, talks of driving

[1] valour] courage 1826. [2] courage] pluck 1826.

armies singly before him—and does it. Tom Brown had a shrewder insight into this kind of character than either of his predecessors. He divides the palm more equably, and allows his hero a sort of dimidiate pre-eminence :—'Bully Dawson kicked by half the town, and half the town kicked by Bully Dawson.' This was true distributive justice.

II.—THAT ILL-GOTTEN GAIN NEVER PROSPERS

The weakest part of mankind have this saying commonest in their [1]mouth. It is the trite consolation administered to the easy dupe, when he has been tricked out of his money or estate, that the acquisition of it will do the owner *no good*. But the rogues of this world—the prudenter part of them, at least—know better ; and, if the observation had been as true as it is old, would not have failed by this time to have discovered it. They have pretty sharp distinctions of the fluctuating and the permanent. 'Lightly come, lightly go,' is a proverb, which they can very well afford to leave, when they leave little else, to the losers. They do not always find manors, got by rapine or chicanery, insensibly to melt away, as the poets will have it ; or that all gold glides, like thawing snow, from the thief's hand that grasps it. Church land, alienated to lay uses, was formerly denounced to have this slippery quality. But some portions of it somehow always stuck so fast, that the denunciators have been fain to postpone the prophecy of refundment to a late posterity.

III.—THAT A MAN MUST NOT LAUGH AT HIS OWN JEST

The severest exaction surely ever invented upon the self-denial of poor human nature ! This is to expect a gentleman to give a treat without partaking of it ; to sit esurient at his own table, and commend the flavour of his venison upon the absurd strength of his never touching it himself. On the contrary, we love to see a wag *taste* his own joke to his party ; to watch a quirk, or a merry conceit, flickering upon the lips some seconds before the tongue is delivered

[1] mouth] mouths 1826.

of it. If it be good, fresh, and racy—begotten of the occasion; if he that utters it never thought it before, he is naturally the first to be tickled with it; and any suppression of such complacence we hold to be churlish and insulting. What does it seem to imply, but that your company is weak or foolish enough to be moved by an image or a fancy, that shall stir you not at all, or but faintly? This is exactly the humour of the fine gentleman in Mandeville, who, while he dazzles his guests with the display of some costly toy, affects himself to 'see nothing considerable in it'.

IV.—THAT SUCH A ONE SHOWS HIS BREEDING.—THAT IT IS EASY TO PERCEIVE HE IS NO GENTLEMAN

A speech from the poorer sort of people, which always indicates that the party vituperated is a gentleman. The very fact which they deny, is that which galls and exasperates them to use this language. The forbearance with which it is usually received, is a proof what interpretation the bystander sets upon it. Of a kin to this, and still less politic, are the phrases with which, in their street rhetoric, they ply one another more grossly:—*He is a poor creature.*—*He has not a rag to cover*——*&c.*; though this last, we confess, is more frequently applied by females to females. They do not perceive that the satire glances upon themselves. A poor man, of all things in the world, should not upbraid an antagonist with poverty. Are there no other topics—as, to tell him his father was hanged—his sister, &c.——, without exposing a secret, which should be kept snug between them; and doing an affront to the order to which they have the honour equally to belong? All this while they do not see how the wealthier man stands by and laughs in his sleeve at both.

V.—THAT THE POOR COPY THE VICES OF THE RICH

A smooth text to the latter; and, preached from the pulpit, is sure of a docile audience from the pews lined with satin. It is twice sitting upon velvet to a foolish squire to be told, that *he*—and not *perverse nature*, as the homilies

would make us imagine, is the true cause of all the irregularities in his parish. This is striking at the root of free-will indeed, and denying the originality of sin in any sense. But men are not such implicit sheep as this comes to. If the abstinence from evil on the part of the upper classes is to derive itself from no higher principle, than the apprehension of setting ill patterns to the lower, we beg leave to discharge them from all squeamishness on that score: they may even take their fill of pleasures, where they can find them. The Genius of Poverty, hampered and straitened as it is, is not so barren of invention but it can trade upon the staple of its own vice, without drawing upon their capital. The poor are not quite such servile imitators as they take them for. Some of them are very clever artists in their way. Here and there we find an original. Who taught the poor to steal, to pilfer ? They did not go to the great for schoolmasters in these faculties surely. It is well if in some vices they allow us to be—no copyists. In no other sense is it true that the poor copy them, than as servants may be said to *take after* their masters and mistresses, when they succeed to their reversionary cold meats. If the master, from indisposition or some other cause, neglect his food, the servant dines notwithstanding.

'O, but (some will say) the force of example is great.' We knew a lady who was so scrupulous on this head, that she would put up with the calls of the most impertinent visitor, rather than let her servant say she was not at home, for fear of teaching her maid to tell an untruth ; and this in the very face of the fact, which she knew well enough, that the wench was one of the greatest liars upon the earth without teaching ; so much so, that her mistress possibly never heard two words of consecutive truth from her in her life. But nature must go for nothing : example must be every thing. This liar in grain, who never opened her mouth without a lie, must be guarded against a remote inference, which she (pretty casuist !) might possibly draw from a form of words—literally false, but essentially deceiving no one—that under some circumstances a fib might not be so exceedingly sinful—a fiction, too, not at all in her own way, or one that she could be suspected of adopting, for few servant-wenches care to be denied to visitors.

This word *example* reminds us of another fine word which is in use upon these occasions—*encouragement.* 'People in our sphere must not be thought to give encouragement to such proceedings.' To such a frantic height is this principle capable of being carried, that we have known individuals who have thought it within the scope of their influence to sanction despair, and give *éclat* to—suicide. A domestic in the family of a county member lately deceased, for love, or some unknown cause, cut his throat, but not successfully. The poor fellow was otherwise much loved and respected; and great interest was used in his behalf, upon his recovery, that he might be permitted to retain his place; his word being first pledged, not without some substantial sponsors to promise for him, that the like should never happen again. His master was inclinable to keep him, but his mistress thought otherwise; and John in the end was dismissed, her ladyship declaring that she 'could not think of encouraging any such doings in the county'.

VI.—THAT ENOUGH IS AS GOOD AS A FEAST

Not a man, woman, or child in ten miles round Guildhall, who really believes this saying. The inventor of it did not believe it himself. It was made in revenge by somebody, who was disappointed of a regale. It is a vile cold-scrag-of-mutton sophism; a lie palmed upon the palate, which knows better things. If nothing else could be said for a feast, this is sufficient, that from the superflux there is usually something left for the next day. Morally interpreted, it belongs to a class of proverbs, which have a tendency to make us undervalue *money.* Of this cast are those notable observations, that money is not health; riches cannot purchase every thing: the metaphor which makes gold to be mere muck, with the morality which traces fine clothing to the sheep's back, and denounces pearl as the unhandsome excretion of an oyster. Hence, too, the phrase which imputes dirt to acres—a sophistry so barefaced, that even the literal sense of it is true only in a wet season. This, and abundance of similar sage saws assuming to inculcate *content,* we verily believe to have been the invention of some cunning borrower, who had designs upon the purse of

his wealthier neighbour, which he could only hope to carry by force of these verbal jugglings. Translate any one of these sayings out of the artful metonyme which envelops it, and the trick is apparent. Goodly legs and shoulders of mutton, exhilarating cordials, books, pictures, the opportunities of seeing foreign countries, independence, heart's ease, a man's own time to himself, are not *muck*—however we may be pleased to scandalise with that appellation the faithful metal that provides them for us.

VII.—OF TWO DISPUTANTS, THE WARMEST IS GENERALLY IN THE WRONG

Our experience would lead us to quite an opposite conclusion. Temper, indeed, is no test of truth ; but warmth and earnestness are a proof at least of a man's own conviction of the rectitude of that which he maintains. Coolness is as often the result of an unprincipled indifference to truth or falsehood, as of a sober confidence in a man's own side in a dispute. Nothing is more insulting sometimes than the appearance of this philosophic temper. There is little Titubus, the stammering law-stationer in Lincoln's Inn—we have seldom known this shrewd little fellow engaged in an argument where we were not convinced he had the best of it, if his tongue would but fairly have seconded him. When he has been spluttering excellent broken sense for an hour together, writhing and labouring to be delivered of the point of dispute—the very gist of the controversy knocking at his teeth, which like some obstinate iron-grating still obstructed its deliverance—his puny frame convulsed, and face reddening all over at an unfairness in the logic which he wanted articulation to expose, it has moved our gall to see a smooth portly fellow of an adversary, that cared not a button for the merits of the question, by merely laying his hand upon the head of the stationer, and desiring him to be *calm* (your tall disputants have always the advantage), with a provoking sneer carry the argument clean from him in the opinion of all the bystanders, who have gone away clearly convinced that Titubus must have been in the wrong, because he was in a passion ; and that Mr. ——, meaning his opponent, is one of the fairest, and at the same time one of the most dispassionate arguers breathing.

VIII.—THAT VERBAL ALLUSIONS ARE NOT WIT, BECAUSE THEY WILL NOT BEAR A TRANSLATION

The same might be said of the wittiest local allusions. A custom is sometimes as difficult to explain to a foreigner as a pun. What would become of a great part of the wit of the last age, if it were tried by this test? How would certain topics, as aldermanity, cuckoldry, have sounded to a Terentian auditory, though Terence himself had been alive to translate them? *Senator urbanus*, with *Curruca* to boot for a synonime, would but faintly have done the business. Words, involving notions, are hard enough to render; it is too much to expect us to translate a sound, and give an elegant version to a jingle. The Virgilian harmony is not translatable, but by substituting harmonious sounds in another language for it. To Latinise a pun, we must seek a pun in Latin, that will answer to it; as, to give an idea of the double endings in Hudibras, we must have recourse to a similar practice in the old monkish doggerel. Dennis, the fiercest oppugner of puns in ancient or modern times, professes himself highly tickled with the 'a stick' chiming to 'ecclesiastic'. Yet what is this but a species of pun, a verbal consonance?

IX.—THAT THE WORST PUNS ARE THE BEST

If by worst be only meant the most far-fetched and startling, we agree to it. A pun is not bound by the laws which limit nicer wit. It is a pistol let off at the ear; not a feather to tickle the intellect. It is an antic which does not stand upon manners, but comes bounding into the presence, and does not show the less comic for being dragged in sometimes by the head and shoulders. What though it limp a little, or prove defective in one leg—all the better. A pun may easily be too curious and artificial. Who has not at one time or other been at a party of professors (himself perhaps an old offender in that line), where, after ringing a round of the most ingenious conceits, every man contributing his shot, and some there the most expert shooters of the day; after making a poor *word* run the gauntlet till it is ready to drop; after hunting and [1]winding

[1] winding] sending 1826.

it through all the possible ambages of similar sounds ; after squeezing, and hauling, and tugging at it, till the very milk of it will not yield a drop further,—suddenly some obscure, unthought-of fellow in a corner, who was never 'prentice to the trade, whom the company for very pity passed over, as we do by a known poor man when a money-subscription is going round, no one calling upon him for his quota—has all at once come out with something so whimsical, yet so pertinent ; so brazen in its pretensions, yet so impossible to be denied ; so exquisitely good, and so deplorably bad, at the same time,—that it has proved a Robin Hood's shot ; any thing ulterior to that is despaired of ; and the party breaks up, unanimously voting it to be the very worst (that is, best) pun of the evening. This species of wit is the better for not being perfect in all its parts. What it gains in completeness, it loses in naturalness. The more exactly it satisfies the critical, the less hold it has upon some other faculties. The puns which are most entertaining are those which will least bear an analysis. Of this kind is the following, recorded, with a sort of stigma, in one of Swift's Miscellanies.

An Oxford scholar, meeting a porter who was carrying a hare through the streets, accosts him with this extraordinary question : 'Prithee, friend, is that thy own hare, or a wig ? '

There is no excusing this, and no resisting it. A man might blur ten sides of paper in attempting a defence of it against a critic who should be laughter-proof. The quibble in itself is not considerable. It is only a new turn given, by a little false pronunciation, to a very common, though not very courteous inquiry. Put by one gentleman to another at a dinner-party, it would have been vapid ; to the mistress of the house, it would have shown much less wit than rudeness. We must take in the totality of time, place, and person ; the pert look of the inquiring scholar, the desponding looks of the puzzled porter ; the one stopping at leisure, the other hurrying on with his burthen ; the innocent though rather abrupt tendency of the first member of the question, with the utter and inextricable irrelevancy of the second ; the place—a public street, not favourable to frivolous investigations ; the affrontive

quality of the primitive inquiry (the common question) invidiously transferred to the derivative (the new turn given to it) in the implied satire ; namely, that few of that tribe are expected to eat of the good things which they carry, they being in most countries considered rather as the temporary trustees than owners of such dainties,—which the fellow was beginning to understand ; but then the *wig* again comes in, and he can make nothing of it : all put together constitute a picture : Hogarth could have made it intelligible on canvass.

Yet nine out of ten critics will pronounce this a very bad pun, because of the defectiveness in the concluding member, which is its very beauty, and constitutes the surprise. The same persons shall cry up for admirable the cold quibble from Virgil about the broken Cremona ;[a] because it is made out in all its parts, and leaves nothing to the imagination. We venture to call it cold ; because of thousands who have admired it, it would be difficult to find one who has heartily chuckled at it. As appealing to the judgment merely (setting the risible faculty aside,) we must pronounce it a monument of curious felicity. But as some stories are said to be too good to be true, it may with equal truth be asserted of this bi-verbal [1] allusion, that it is too good to be natural. One cannot help suspecting that the incident was invented to fit the line. It would have been better had it been less perfect. Like some Virgilian hemistichs, it has suffered by filling up. The *nimium Vicina* was enough in conscience ; the *Cremonæ* afterwards loads it. It is in fact a double pun ; and we have always observed that a superfœtation in this sort of wit is dangerous. When a man has said a good thing, it is seldom politic to follow it up. We do not care to be cheated a second time ; or, perhaps, the mind of man (with reverence be it spoken) is not capacious enough to lodge two puns at a time. The impression, to be forcible, must be simultaneous and undivided.

[a] Swift. [Mantua vae miserae nimium vicina Cremonae.—1826 *only*.]

[1] allusion, that] allusion applied by Swift to a lady's dress, or mantua (as it was then termed) coming in contact with one of those fiddles called Cremonas, that 1826.

X.—THAT HANDSOME IS THAT HANDSOME DOES

[This '*Fallacy*', followed by *That my Lord Shaftesbury*, &c. (see *The Genteel Style in Writing*, p. 719 above) and No. XII of the present series, appeared in *The New Monthly Magazine*, March, 1826, pp. 258–65.]

Those who use this proverb can never have seen Mrs. Conrady.

The soul, if we may believe Plotinus, is a ray from the celestial beauty. As she partakes more or less of this heavenly light, she informs, with corresponding characters, the fleshly tenement which she chooses, and frames to herself a suitable mansion.

All which only proves that the soul of Mrs. Conrady, in her pre-existent state, was no great judge of architecture.

To the same effect, in a Hymn in honour of Beauty, divine Spenser, *platonizing*, sings :—

> ——'Every spirit as it is more pure,
> And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
> So it the fairer body doth procure
> To habit in, and it more fairly dight
> With cheerful grace and amiable sight.
> For of the soul the body form doth take:
> For soul is form, and doth the body make.'

But Spenser, it is clear, never saw Mrs. Conrady.

These poets, we find, are no safe guides in philosophy; for here, in his very next stanza but one, is a saving clause, which throws us all out again, and leaves us as much to seek as ever :—

> 'Yet oft it falls, that many a gentle mind
> Dwells in deformed tabernacle drown'd,
> Either by chance, against the course of kind,
> Or through unaptness in the substance found,
> Which it assumed of some stubborn ground,
> That will not yield unto her form's direction,
> But is perform'd with some foul imperfection.'

From which it would follow, that Spenser had seen somebody like Mrs. Conrady.

The spirit of this good lady—her previous *anima*—must have stumbled upon one of these untoward tabernacles which he speaks of. A more rebellious commodity of clay for a ground, as the poet calls it, no gentle mind—and sure her's is one of the gentlest—ever had to deal with.

Pondering upon her inexplicable visage—inexplicable,

we mean, but by this modification of the theory—we have come to a conclusion that, if one must be plain, it is better to be plain all over, than, amidst a tolerable residue of features, to hang out one that shall be exceptionable. No one can say of Mrs. Conrady's countenance, that it would be better if she had but a nose. It is impossible to pull her to pieces in this manner. We have seen the most malicious beauties of her own sex baffled in the attempt at a selection. The *tout ensemble* defies particularising. It is too complete —too consistent, as we may say—to admit of these invidious reservations. It is not as if some Apelles had picked out here a lip—and there a chin—out of the collected ugliness of Greece, to frame a model by. It is a symmetrical whole. We challenge the minutest connoisseur to cavil at any part or parcel of the countenance in question ; to say that this, or that, is improperly placed. We are convinced that true ugliness, no less than is affirmed of true beauty, is the result of harmony. Like that too it reigns without a competitor. No one ever saw Mrs. Conrady, without pronouncing her to be the plainest woman that he ever met with in the course of his life. The first time that you are indulged with a sight of her face, is an era in your existence ever after. You are glad to have seen it—like Stonehenge. No one can pretend to forget it. No one ever apologised to her for meeting her in the street on such a day and not knowing her : the pretext would be too bare. Nobody can mistake her for another. Nobody can say of her, 'I think I have seen that face somewhere, but I cannot call to mind where.' You must remember that in [1]such a parlour it first struck you—like a bust. You wondered where the owner of the house had picked it up. You wondered more when it began to move its lips—so mildly too ! No one ever thought of asking her to sit for her picture. Lockets are for remembrance ; and it would be clearly superfluous to hang an image at your heart, which, once seen, can never be out of it. It is not a mean face [2]either ; its entire originality precludes that. Neither is it of that order of plain faces which improve upon acquaintance. Some very good but ordinary people, by an unwearied perseverance in good offices, put a cheat upon our

[1] such] such or such 1826. [2] either] neither 1826.

eyes: juggle our senses out of their natural impressions; and set us upon discovering good indications in a countenance, which at first sight promised nothing less. We detect gentleness, which had escaped us, lurking about an under lip. But when Mrs. Conrady has done you a service, her face remains the same; when she has done you a thousand, and you know that she is ready to double the number, still it is that individual face. Neither can you say of it, that it would be a good face if it was not marked by the small-pox—a compliment which is always more admissive than excusatory—for either Mrs. Conrady never had the small-pox; or, as we say, took it kindly. No, it stands upon its own merits fairly. There it is. It is her mark, her token; that which she is known by.

XI.—THAT WE MUST NOT LOOK A GIFT-HORSE IN THE MOUTH

[Printed in *The New Monthly Magazine*, April, 1826, p. 418.]

Nor a lady's age in the parish register. We hope we have more delicacy than to do either: but some faces spare us the trouble of these *dental* inquiries. And what if the beast, which my friend would force upon my acceptance, prove, upon the face of it, a sorry Rozinante, a lean, ill-favoured jade, whom no gentleman could think of setting up in his stables? Must I, rather than not be obliged to my friend, make her a companion to Eclipse or Lightfoot? A horse-giver, no more than a horse-seller, has a right to palm his spavined article upon us for good ware. An equivalent is expected in either case; and, with my own good will, I would no more be cheated out of my thanks, than out of my money. Some people have a knack of putting upon you gifts of no real value, to engage you to substantial gratitude. We thank them for nothing. Our friend Mitis carries this humour of never refusing a present, to the very point of absurdity—if it were possible to couple the ridiculous with so much mistaken delicacy, and real good-nature. Not an apartment in his fine house (and he has a true taste in household decorations), but is stuffed up with some preposterous print or mirror—the worst adapted to his panels that may be—the presents of his friends that know his weakness; while his noble Vandykes are displaced,

to make room for a set of daubs, the work of some wretched artist of his acquaintance, who, having had them returned upon his hands for bad likenesses, finds his account in bestowing them here gratis. The good creature has not the heart to mortify the painter at the expense of an honest refusal. It is pleasant (if it did not vex one at the same time) to see him sitting in his dining parlour, surrounded with obscure aunts and cousins to God knows whom, while the true Lady Marys and Lady Bettys of his own honourable family, in favour to these adopted frights, are consigned to the staircase and the lumber-room. In like manner his goodly shelves are one by one stript of his favourite old authors, to give place to a collection of presentation copies—the flower [? flour] and bran of modern poetry. A presentation copy, reader—if haply you are yet innocent of such favours—is a copy of a book which does not sell, sent you by the author, with his foolish autograph at the beginning of it; for which, if a stranger, he only demands your friendship; if a brother author, he expects from you a book of yours which does sell, in return. We can speak to experience, having by us a tolerable assortment of these gift-horses. Not to ride a metaphor to death—we are willing to acknowledge, that in some gifts there is sense. A duplicate out of a friend's library (where he has more than one copy of a rare author) is intelligible. There are favours, short of the pecuniary—a thing not fit to be hinted at among gentlemen—which confer as much grace upon the acceptor as the offerer: the kind, we confess, which is most to our palate, is of those little conciliatory missives, which for their vehicle generally choose a hamper—little odd presents of game, fruit, perhaps wine—though it is essential to the delicacy of the latter that it be home-made. We love to have our friend in the country sitting thus at our table by proxy; to apprehend his presence (though a hundred miles may be between us) by a turkey, whose goodly aspect reflects to us his 'plump corpusculum'; to taste him in grouse or woodcock; to feel him gliding down in the toast peculiar to the latter; to concorporate him in a slice of Canterbury brawn. This is indeed to have him within ourselves; to know him intimately: such participation is methinks unitive, as the old theologians phrase it.

For these considerations we should be sorry if certain restrictive regulations, which are thought to bear hard upon the peasantry of this country, were entirely done away with. A hare, as the law now stands, makes many friends. Caius conciliates Titius (knowing his *goût*) with a leash of partridges. Titius (suspecting his partiality for them) passes them to Lucius; who in his turn, preferring his friend's relish to his own, makes them over to Marcius; till in their ever widening progress, and round of unconscious circum-migration, they distribute the seeds of harmony over half a parish. We are well disposed to this kind of sensible remembrances; and are the less apt to be taken by those little airy tokens—inpalpable to the palate—which, under the names of rings, lockets, keep-sakes, amuse some people's fancy mightily. We could never away with these indigestible trifles. They are the very kickshaws and foppery of friendship.

XII.—THAT HOME IS HOME THOUGH IT IS NEVER SO HOMELY

[See No. X of this series.]

[1]Homes there are, we are sure, that are no homes: the home of the very poor man, and another which we shall speak to presently. Crowded places of cheap entertainment, and the benches of ale-houses, if they could speak, might bear mournful testimony to the [2]first. To them the very poor man resorts for an image of the home, which he cannot find at home. For a starved grate, and a scanty firing, that is not enough to keep alive the natural heat in the fingers of so many shivering children with their mother, he finds in the depth of winter always a blazing hearth, and a hob to warm his pittance of beer by. Instead of the clamours of a wife, made gaunt by famishing, he meets with a cheerful attendance beyond the merits of the trifle which he can afford to spend. He has companions which his home denies him, for the very poor man [3]has no visitors. He can look into the goings on of the world, and speak a little to politics. At home there are no politics stirring, but the domestic. All interests, real or imaginary, all topics

[1] Homes] Two homes 1826. [2] first.] first of our assertions. 1826.
[3] has] can ask 1826.

that should expand the mind of man, and connect him to a sympathy with general existence, are crushed in the absorbing consideration of food to be obtained for the family. Beyond the price of bread, news is senseless and impertinent. At home there is no larder. Here there is at least a show of plenty ; and while he cooks his lean scrap of butcher's meat before the common bars, or munches his humbler cold viands, his relishing bread and cheese with an onion, in a corner, where no one reflects upon his poverty, he has sight of the substantial joint providing for the landlord and his family. He takes an interest in the dressing of it ; and while he assists in removing the trivet from the fire, he feels that there is such a thing as beef and cabbage, which he was beginning to forget at home. All this while he deserts his wife and children. But what wife, and what children ? Prosperous men, who object to this desertion, image to themselves some clean contented family like that which they go home to. But look at the countenance of the poor wives who follow and persecute their good man to the door of the public house, which he is about to enter, when something like shame would restrain him, if stronger misery did not induce him to pass the threshold. That face, ground by want, in which every cheerful, every conversable lineament has been long effaced by misery,— is that a face to stay at home with ? is it more a woman, or a wild cat ? alas ! it is the face of the wife of his youth, that once smiled upon him. It can smile no longer. What comforts can it share ? what burthens can it lighten ? Oh, 'tis a fine thing to talk of the humble meal shared together ! But what if there be no bread in the cupboard ? The innocent prattle of his children takes out the sting of a man's poverty. But the children of the very poor do not prattle. It is none of the least frightful features in that condition, that there is no childishness in its dwellings. Poor people, said a sensible old nurse to us once, do not bring up their children ; they drag them up. The little careless darling of the wealthier nursery, in their hovel is transformed betimes into a premature reflecting person. No one has time to dandle it, no one thinks it worth while to coax it, to soothe it, to toss it up and down, to humour it. There is none to kiss away its tears. If it cries, it can

only be beaten. It has been prettily said that 'a babe is fed with milk and praise'. But the ailment of this poor babe was thin, unnourishing; the return to its little baby-tricks, and efforts to engage attention, bitter ceaseless objurgation. It never had a toy, or knew what a coral meant. It grew up without the lullaby of nurses, it was a stranger to the patient fondle, the hushing caress, the attracting novelty, the costlier plaything, or the cheaper off-hand contrivance to divert the child; the prattled nonsense (best sense to it), the wise impertinences, the wholesome lies, the apt story interposed, that puts a stop to present sufferings, and awakens the passion of young wonder. It was never sung to—no one ever told to it a tale of the nursery. It was dragged up, to live or to die as it happened. It had no young dreams. It broke at once into the iron realities of life. A child exists not for the very poor as any object of dalliance; it is only another mouth to be fed, a pair of little hands to be betimes inured to labour. It is the rival, till it can be the co-operator, for food with the parent. It is never his mirth, his diversion, his solace; it never makes him young again, with recalling his young times. The children of the very poor have no young times. It makes the very heart to bleed to overhear the casual street-talk between a poor woman and her little girl, a woman of the better sort of poor, in a condition rather above the squalid beings which we have been contemplating. It is not of toys, of nursery books, of summer holidays (fitting that age); of the promised sight, or play; of praised sufficiency at school. It is of mangling and clear-starching, of the price of coals, or of potatoes. The questions of the child, that should be the very outpourings of curiosity in idleness, are marked with forecast and melancholy providence. It has come to be a woman, before it was a child. It has learned to go to market; it chaffers, it haggles, it envies, it murmurs; it is knowing, acute, sharpened; it never prattles. Had we not reason to say, that the home of the very poor is no home?

There is yet another home, which we are constrained to deny to be one. It has a larder, which the home of the poor man wants; its fireside conveniences, of which the poor dream not. But with all this, it is no home. It is—

the house of the man that is infested with many visitors. May we be branded for the veriest churl, if we deny our heart to the many noble-hearted friends that at times exchange their dwelling for our poor roof! It is not of guests that we complain, but of endless, purposeless visitants; droppers in, as they are called. We sometimes wonder from what sky they fall. It is the very error of the position of our lodging; its horoscopy was ill calculated, being just situate in a medium—a plaguy suburban midspace—fitted to catch idlers from town or country. We are older than we were, and age is easily put out of its way. We have fewer sands in our glass to reckon upon, and we cannot brook to see them drop in endlessly succeeding impertinences. At our time of life, to be alone sometimes is as needful as sleep. It is the refreshing sleep of the [1]day. The growing infirmities of age manifest themselves in nothing more strongly, than in an inveterate dislike of interruption. The thing which we are doing, we wish to be permitted to do. We have neither much knowledge nor devices; but there are fewer in the place to which we hasten. We are not willingly put out of our way, even at a game of nine-pins. While youth was, we had vast reversions in time future; we are reduced to a present pittance, and obliged to economise in that article. We bleed away our moments now as hardly as our ducats. We cannot bear to have our thin wardrobe eaten and fretted into by moths. We are willing to barter our good time with a friend, who gives us in exchange his own. Herein is the distinction between the genuine guest and the visitant. This latter takes your good time, and gives you his bad in exchange. The guest is domestic to you as your good cat, or household bird; the visitant is your fly, that flaps in at your window, and out again, leaving nothing but a sense of disturbance, and victuals spoiled. The inferior functions of life begin to move heavily. We cannot concoct our food with interruptions. Our chief meal, to be nutritive, must be solitary. With difficulty

[1] day.] day. O the comfort of sitting down heartily to an old folio, and thinking surely that the next hour or two will be your own—and the misery of being defeated by the useless call of somebody, who is come to tell you that he is just come from hearing Mr. Irving! What is that to you? Let him go home, and digest what the good man has said to him. You are at your chapel, in your oratory.—1826.

we can eat before a guest ; and never understood what the relish of public feasting meant. Meats have no sapor, nor digestion fair play, in a crowd. The unexpected coming in of a visitant stops the machine. There is a punctual generation who time their calls to the precise commencement of your dining-hour—not to eat—but to see you eat. Our knife and fork drop instinctively, and we feel that we have swallowed our latest morsel. Others again show their genius, as we have said, in knocking the moment you have just sat down to a book. They have a peculiar compassionating sneer, with which they 'hope that they do not interrupt your studies'. Though they flutter off the next moment, to carry their impertinences to the nearest student that they can call their friend, the tone of the book is spoiled; we shut the leaves, and, with Dante's lovers, read no more that day. It were well if the effect of intrusion were simply co-extensive with its presence ; but it mars all the good hours afterwards. These scratches in appearance leave an orifice that closes not hastily. 'It is a prostitution of the bravery of friendship', says worthy Bishop Taylor, 'to spend it upon impertinent people, who are, it may be, loads to their families, but can never ease my loads.' This is the secret of their gaddings, their visits, and morning calls. They too have homes, which are—no homes.

XIII.—THAT YOU MUST LOVE ME, AND LOVE MY DOG

[This and the two following *Fallacies* appeared in their present order in *The New Monthly Magazine*, Feb., 1826, pp. 224-9.]

'Good sir, or madam, as it may be—we most willingly embrace the offer of your friendship. We long have known your excellent qualities. We have wished to have you nearer to us ; to hold you within the very innermost fold of our heart. We can have no reserve towards a person of your open and noble nature. The frankness of your humour suits us exactly. We have been long looking for such a friend. Quick—let us disburthen our troubles into each other's bosom—let us make our single joys shine by reduplication—But *yap, yap, yap!*—what is this confounded cur ? he has fastened his tooth, which is none of the bluntest, just in the fleshy part of my leg.'

'It is my dog, sir. You must love him for my sake. Here, Test—Test—Test!'

'But he has bitten me.'

'Ay, that he is apt to do, till you are better acquainted with him. I have had him three years. He never bites me.'

Yap, yap, yap!—'He is at it again.'

'Oh, sir, you must not kick him. He does not like to be kicked. I expect my dog to be treated with all the respect due to myself.'

'But do you always take him out with you, when you go a friendship-hunting?'

'Invariably. 'Tis the sweetest, prettiest, best-conditioned animal. I call him my *test*—the touchstone by which I try a friend. No one can properly be said to love me, who does not love him.'

'Excuse us, dear sir—or madam aforesaid—if upon further consideration we are obliged to decline the otherwise invaluable offer of your friendship. We do not like dogs.'

'Mighty well, sir—you know the conditions—you may have worse offers. Come along, Test.'

The above dialogue is not so imaginary, but that, in the intercourse of life, we have had frequent occasions of breaking off an agreeable intimacy by reason of these canine appendages. They do not always come in the shape of dogs; they sometimes wear the more plausible and human character of kinsfolk, near acquaintances, my friend's friend, his partner, his wife, or his children. We could never yet form a friendship—not to speak of more delicate correspondences—however much to our taste, without the intervention of some third anomaly, some impertinent clog affixed to the relation—the understood *dog* in the proverb. The good things of life are not to be had singly, but come to us with a mixture; like a schoolboy's holiday, with a task affixed to the tail of it. What a delightful companion is * * * *, if he did not always bring his tall cousin with him! He seems to grow with him; like some of those double births, which we remember to have read of with such wonder and delight in the old 'Athenian Oracle', where Swift commenced author by writing Pindaric Odes (what a beginning for him!) upon Sir William Temple. There is the picture of the brother, with the little brother

peeping out at his shoulder ; a species of fraternity, which we have no name of kin close enough to comprehend. When * * * * comes, poking in his head and shoulders into your room, as if to feel his entry, you think, surely you have now got him to yourself—what a three hours' chat we shall have !—but, ever in the haunch of him, and before his diffident body is well disclosed in your apartment, appears the haunting shadow of the cousin, over-peering his modest kinsman, and sure to over-lay the expected good talk with his insufferable procerity of stature, and uncorresponding dwarfishness of observation. Misfortunes seldom come alone. 'Tis hard when a blessing comes accompanied. Cannot we like Sempronia, without sitting down to chess with her eternal brother ? or know Sulpicia, without knowing all the round of her card-playing relations ? must my friend's brethren of necessity be mine also ? must we be hand and glove with Dick Selby the parson, or Jack Selby the calico printer, because W. S., who is neither, but a ripe wit and a critic, has the misfortune to claim a common parentage with them ? Let him lay down his brothers ; and 'tis odds but we will cast him in a pair of our's (we have a superflux) to balance the concession. Let F. H. lay down his garrulous uncle ; and Honorius dismiss his vapid wife, and superfluous establishment of six boys—things between boy and manhood—too ripe for play, too raw for conversation—that come in, impudently staring their father's old friend out of countenance ; and will neither aid, nor let alone, the conference : that we may once more meet upon equal terms, as we were wont to do in the disengaged state of bachelorhood.

It is well if your friend, or mistress, be content with these canicular probations. Few young ladies but in this sense keep a dog. But when Rutilia hounds at you her tiger aunt; or Ruspina expects you to cherish and fondle her viper sister, whom she has preposterously taken into her bosom, to try stinging conclusions upon your constancy ; they must not complain if the house be rather thin of suitors. Scylla must have broken off many excellent matches in her time, if she insisted upon all, that loved her, loving her dogs also.

An excellent story to this moral is told of Merry, of Della

Cruscan memory. In tender youth, he loved and courted a modest appanage to the Opera, in truth a dancer, who had won him by the artless contrast between her manners and situation. She seemed to him a native violet, that had been transplanted by some rude accident into that exotic and artificial hotbed. Nor, in truth, was she less genuine and sincere than she appeared to him. He wooed and won this flower. Only for appearance' sake, and for due honour to the bride's relations, she craved that she might have the attendance of her friends and kindred at the approaching solemnity. The request was too amiable not to be conceded; and in this solicitude for conciliating the good will of mere relations, he found a presage of her superior attentions to himself, when the golden shaft should have 'killed the flock of all affections else'. The morning came; and at the Star and Garter, Richmond—the place appointed for the breakfasting—accompanied with one English friend, he impatiently awaited what reinforcements the bride should bring to grace the ceremony. A rich muster she had made. They came in six coaches—the whole corps du ballet—French, Italian, men and women. Monsieur de B., the famous *pirouetter* of the day, led his fair spouse, but craggy, from the banks of the Seine. The Prima Donna had sent her excuse. But the first and second Buffa were there; and Signor Sc—, and Signora Ch—, and Madame V—, with a countless cavalcade besides of chorusers, figurantes, at the sight of whom Merry afterwards declared, that 'then for the first time it struck him seriously, that he was about to marry—a dancer'. But there was no help for it. Besides, it was her day; these were, in fact, her friends and kinsfolk. The assemblage, though whimsical, was all very natural. But when the bride—handing out of the last coach a still more extraordinary figure than the rest—presented to him as her *father*—the gentleman that was to *give her away*—no less a person than Signor Delpini himself—with a sort of pride, as much as to say, See what I have brought to do us honour!—the thought of so extraordinary a paternity quite overcame him; and slipping away under some pretence from the bride and her motley adherents, poor Merry took horse from the back yard to the nearest sea-coast, from which, shipping

himself to America, he shortly after consoled himself with a more congenial match in the person of Miss Brunton; relieved from his intended clown father, and a bevy of painted Buffas for bridemaids.

XIV.—THAT WE SHOULD RISE WITH THE LARK

At what precise minute that little airy musician doffs his night gear, and prepares to tune up his unseasonable matins, we are not naturalists enough to determine. But for a mere human gentleman—that has no orchestra business to call him from his warm bed to such preposterous exercises—we take ten, or half after ten (eleven, of course during this Christmas solstice), to be the very earliest hour, at which he can begin to think of abandoning his pillow. To think of it, we say; for to do it in earnest, requires another half-hour's good consideration. Not but there are pretty sun-risings, as we are told, and such like gawds, abroad in the world, in summer time especially, some hours before what we have assigned; which a gentleman may see, as they say, only for getting up. But, having been tempted once or twice, in earlier life, to assist at those ceremonies, we confess our curiosity abated. We are no longer ambitious of being the sun's courtiers, to attend at his morning levees. We hold the good hours of the dawn too sacred to waste them upon such observances; which have in them, besides, something Pagan and Persic. To say truth, we never anticipated our usual hour, or got up with the sun (as 'tis called), to go a journey, or upon a foolish whole day's pleasuring, but we suffered for it all the long hours after in listlessness and headachs; Nature herself sufficiently declaring her sense of our presumption, in aspiring to regulate our frail waking courses by the measures of that celestial and sleepless traveller. We deny not that there is something sprightly and vigorous, at the outset especially, in these break-of-day excursions. It is flattering to get the start of a lazy world; to conquer death by proxy in his image. But the seeds of sleep and mortality are in us; and we pay usually in strange qualms, before night falls, the penalty of the unnatural inversion. Therefore, while the busy part of mankind are fast huddling on their clothes, [1]are already up and about

[1] are] or are 1826.

their occupations, content to have swallowed their sleep by wholesale; we choose to linger a-bed, and digest our dreams. It is the very time to recombine the wandering images, which night in a confused mass presented; to snatch them from forgetfulness; to shape, and mould them. Some people have no good of their dreams. Like fast feeders, they gulp them too grossly, to taste them curiously. We love to chew the cud of a foregone vision: to collect the scattered rays of a brighter phantasm, or act over again, with firmer nerves, the sadder nocturnal tragedies; to drag into day-light a struggling and half-vanishing night-mare; to handle and examine the terrors, or the airy solaces. We have too much respect for these spiritual communications, to let them go so lightly. We are not so stupid, or so careless, as that Imperial forgetter of his dreams, that we should need a seer to remind us of the form of them. They seem to us to have as much significance as our waking concerns; or rather to import us more nearly, as more nearly we approach by years to the shadowy world, whither we [1]are hastening. We have shaken hands with the world's business; we have done with it; we have discharged ourself of it. Why should we get up? we have neither suit to solicit, nor affairs to manage. The drama has shut in upon us at the fourth act. We have nothing here to expect, but in a short time a sick bed, and a dismissal. We delight to anticipate death by such shadows as night affords. We are already half acquainted with ghosts. We were never much in the world. Disappointment early struck a dark veil between us and its dazzling illusions. Our spirits showed grey before our hairs. The mighty changes of the world already appear as but the vain stuff out of which dramas are composed. We have asked no more of life than what the mimic images in play-houses present us with. Even those types have waxed fainter. Our clock appears to have struck. We are SUPERANNUATED. In this dearth of mundane satisfaction, we contract politic alliances with shadows. It is good to have friends at court. The abstracted media of dreams seem no ill introduction to that spiritual presence, upon which, in no long time, we expect to be thrown. We are trying to know a little of the usages of that colony;

[1] are] are all 1826.

to learn the language, and the faces we shall meet with there, that we may be the less awkward at our first coming among them. We willingly call a phantom our fellow, as knowing we shall soon be of their dark companionship. Therefore, we cherish dreams. We try to spell in them the alphabet of the invisible world; and think we know already, how it shall be with us. Those uncouth shapes, which, while we clung to flesh and blood, affrighted us, have become familiar. We feel attenuated into their meagre essences, and have given the hand of half-way approach to incorporeal being. We once thought life to be something; but it has unaccountably fallen from us before its time. Therefore we choose to dally with visions. The sun has no purposes of ours to light us to. Why should we get up?

XV.—THAT WE SHOULD LIE DOWN WITH THE LAMB

We could never quite understand the philosophy of this arrangement, or the wisdom of our ancestors in sending us for instruction to these woolly bedfellows. A sheep, when it is dark, has nothing to do but to shut his silly eyes, and sleep if he can. Man found out long sixes.—Hail, candle-light! without disparagement to sun or moon, the kindliest luminary of the three—if we may not rather style thee their radiant deputy, mild viceroy of the moon!—We love to read, talk, sit silent, eat, drink, sleep, by candle-light. They are every body's sun and moon. This is our peculiar and household planet. Wanting it, what savage unsocial nights must our ancestors have spent, wintering in caves and unillumined fastnesses! They must have lain about and grumbled at one another in the dark. What repartees could have passed, when you must have felt about for a smile, and handled a neighbour's cheek to be sure that he understood it? This accounts for the seriousness of the elder poetry. It has a sombre cast (try Hesiod or Ossian), derived from the tradition of those unlantern'd nights. Jokes came in with candles. We wonder how they saw to pick up a pin, if they had any. How did they sup? what a mélange of chance carving they must have made of it!—here one had got a leg of a goat, when he wanted a horse's shoulder—there another had dipt his scooped palm

in a kid-skin of wild honey, when he meditated right mare's milk. There is neither good eating nor drinking in fresco. Who, even in these civilised times, has never experienced this, when at some economic table he has commenced dining after dusk, and waited for the flavour till the lights came? The senses absolutely give and take reciprocally. Can you tell pork from veal in the dark? or distinguish Sherris from pure Malaga? Take away the candle from the smoking man; by the glimmering of the left ashes, he knows that he is still smoking, but he knows it only by an inference; till the restored light, coming in aid of the olfactories, reveals to both senses the full aroma. Then how he redoubles his puffs! how he burnishes!—There is absolutely no such thing as reading, but by a candle. We have tried the affectation of a book at noon-day in gardens, and in sultry arbours; but it was labour thrown away. Those gay motes in the beam come about you, hovering and teazing, like so many coquets, that will have you all to their self, and are jealous of your abstractions. By the midnight taper, the writer digests his meditations. By the same light, we must approach to their perusal, if we would catch the flame, the odour. It is a mockery, all that is reported of the influential Phœbus. No true poem ever owed its birth to the sun's light. They are abstracted works—

> 'Things that were born, when none but the still night,
> And his dumb candle, saw his pinching throes.'

Marry, daylight—daylight might furnish the images, the crude material; but for the fine shapings, the true turning and filing (as mine author hath it), they must be content to hold their inspiration of the candle. The mild internal light, that reveals them, like fires on the domestic hearth, goes out in the sunshine. Night and silence call out the starry fancies. Milton's Morning Hymn on Paradise, we would hold a good wager, was penned at midnight; and Taylor's richer description of a [a] sun-rise smells decidedly of the taper. Even ourself, in these our humbler lucubrations, tune our best measured cadences (Prose has her cadences) not unfrequently to the charm of the drowsier watchman, 'blessing the doors;' or the wild sweep of winds at mid-

[a] Holy Dying [1826 *only*].

night. Even now a loftier speculation than we have yet attempted, courts our endeavours. We would indite something about the Solar System.—*Betty, bring the candles.*

XVI.—THAT A SULKY TEMPER IS A MISFORTUNE

[Printed in *The New Monthly Magazine*, Sept., 1826, pp. 245-7.]

We grant that it is, and a very serious one—to a man's friends, and to all that have to do with him; but whether the condition of the man himself is so much to be deplored, may admit of a question. We can speak a little to it, being ourself but lately recovered—we whisper it in confidence, reader—out of a long and desperate fit of the sullens. Was the cure a blessing? The conviction which wrought it, came too clearly to leave a scruple of the fanciful injuries—for they were mere fancies—which had provoked the humour. But the humour itself was too self-pleasing, while it lasted—we know how bare we lay ourself in the confession—to be abandoned all at once with the grounds of it. We still brood over wrongs which we know to have been imaginary; and for our old acquaintance, N——, whom we find to have been a truer friend than we took him for, we substitute some phantom—a Caius or a Titius—as like him as we dare to form it, to wreak our yet unsatisfied resentments on. It is mortifying to fall at once from the pinnacle of neglect; to forego the idea of having been ill-used and contumaciously treated by an old friend. The first thing to aggrandise a man in his own conceit, is to conceive of himself as neglected. There let him fix if he can. To undeceive him is to deprive him of the most tickling morsel within the range of self-complacency. No flattery can come near it. Happy is he who suspects his friend of an injustice; but supremely blest, who thinks all his friends in a conspiracy to depress and undervalue him. There is a pleasure (we sing not to the profane) far beyond the reach of all that the world counts joy—a deep, enduring satisfaction in the depths, where the superficial seek it not, of discontent. Were we to recite one half of this mystery, which we were let into by our late dissatisfaction, all the world would be in love with disrespect; we should wear a slight for a bracelet, and neglects and contumacies would be the only

matter for courtship. Unlike to that mysterious book in the Apocalypse, the study of this mystery is unpalatable only in the commencement. The first sting of a suspicion is grievous; but wait—out of that wound, which to flesh and blood seemed so difficult, there is balm and honey to be extracted. Your friend passed you on such or such a day,—having in his company one that you conceived worse than ambiguously disposed towards you,—passed you in the street without notice. To be sure he is something short-sighted; and it was in your power to have accosted *him*. But facts and sane inferences are trifles to a true adept in the science of dissatisfaction. He must have seen you; and S——, who was with him, must have been the cause of the contempt. It galls you, and well it may. But have patience. Go home, and make the worst of it, and you are a made man from this time. Shut yourself up, and—rejecting, as an enemy to your peace, every whispering suggestion that but insinuates there may be a mistake—reflect seriously upon the many lesser instances which you had begun to perceive, in proof of your friend's disaffection towards you. None of them singly was much to the purpose, but the aggregate weight is positive; and you have this last affront to clench them. Thus far the process is any thing but agreeable. But now to your relief comes in the comparative faculty. You conjure up all the kind feelings you have had for your friend; what you have been to him, and what you would have been to him, if he would have suffered you; how you defended him in this or that place; and his good name—his literary reputation, and so forth, was always dearer to you than your own! Your heart, spite of itself, yearns towards him. You could weep tears of blood but for a restraining pride. How say you? do you not yet begin to apprehend a comfort? some allay of sweetness in the bitter waters? Stop not here, nor penuriously cheat yourself of your reversions. You are on vantage ground. Enlarge your speculations, and take in the rest of your friends, as a spark kindles more sparks. Was there one among them, who has not to you proved hollow, false, slippery as water? Begin to think that the relation itself is inconsistent with mortality. That the very idea of friendship, with its component parts, as honour,

fidelity, steadiness, exists but in your single bosom. Image yourself to yourself, as the only possible friend in a world incapable of that communion. Now the gloom thickens. The little star of self-love twinkles, that is to encourage you through deeper glooms than this. You are not yet at the half point of your elevation. You are not yet, believe me, half sulky enough. Adverting to the world in general, (as these circles in the mind will spread to infinity) reflect with what strange injustice you have been treated in quarters where, (setting gratitude and the expectation of friendly returns aside as chimeras,) you pretended no claim beyond justice, the naked due of all men. Think the very idea of right and fit fled from the earth, or your breast the solitary receptacle of it, till you have swelled yourself into at least one hemisphere; the other being the vast Arabia Stony of your friends and the world aforesaid. To grow bigger every moment in your own conceit, and the world to lessen: to deify yourself at the expense of your species; to judge the world—this is the acme and supreme point of your mystery—these the true PLEASURES of SULKINESS. We profess no more of this grand secret than what ourself experimented on one rainy afternoon in the last week, sulking in our study. We had proceeded to the penultimate point, at which the true adept seldom stops, where the consideration of benefit forgot is about to merge in the meditation of general injustice—when a knock at the door was followed by the entrance of the very friend, whose not seeing of us in the morning, (for we will now confess the case our own), an accidental oversight, had given rise to so much agreeable generalization! To mortify us still more, and take down the whole flattering superstructure which pride had piled upon neglect, he had brought in his hand the identical S——, in whose favour we had suspected him of the contumacy. Asseverations were needless, where the frank manner of them both was convictive of the injurious nature of the suspicion. We fancied that they perceived our embarrassment; but were too proud, or something else, to confess to the secret of it. We had been but too lately in the condition of the noble patient in [1]Argos:

[1] Argos] Horace 1826.

Qui se credebat miros audire tragoedos,
In vacuo laetus sessor plausorque [1]theatro—

and could have exclaimed with equal reason against the friendly [2]hands that cured us—

Pol me occidistis, amici,
Non servâstis, ait; cui sic extorta voluptas,
Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error.

[1] theatro—] theatro— Ep. 2. 2. 130. 1826. [2] hands] hand 1826.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, 1808.—That part of the Preface, and the Notes, omitted by Lamb when reprinting a selection from both in the *Works* of 1818, are given below in the order in which they appear in the book.

Preface.—"More than a third part of the following specimens are from plays which are to be found only in the British Museum and in some scarce private libraries. The rest are from Dodsley's and Hawkins's collections, and the works of Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Massinger.

"I have chosen wherever I could to give entire scenes, and in some instances successive scenes, rather than to string together single passages and detached beauties, which I have always found wearisome in the reading in selections of this nature.

"To every extract is prefixed an explanatory head, sufficient to make it intelligible with the help of some trifling omissions. Where a line or more was obscure, as having reference to something that had gone before, which would have asked more time to explain than its consequence in the scene seemed to deserve, I have had no hesitation in leaving the line or passage out. Sometimes where I have met with a superfluous character, which seemed to burthen without throwing any light upon the scene, I have ventured to dismiss it altogether. I have expunged without ceremony all that which the writers had better never have written, that forms the objection so often repeated to the promiscuous reading of Fletcher, Massenger, and some others.

"The kind of extracts which I have sought after have been, not so much passages of wit and humour", etc. [*This and the next paragraph form the introductory note to* CHARACTERS OF DRAMATIC WRITERS, CONTEMPORARY WITH SHAKSPEARE, *printed in the* WORKS *of* 1818. See p. 53, above.]

"The specimens are not accompanied with any thing in the shape of biographical notices. (The few notes which are interspersed will be found to be chiefly critical.—*Author's footnote.*) I had nothing of consequence to add to the slight sketches in Dodsley and the Biographia Dramatica, and I was unwilling to swell the volume with mere transcription. The reader will not fail to observe from the frequent instances of two or more persons joining in the composition of the same play (the noble practice of those times) that of most of the writers contained in these selections it may be strictly said, that they were contemporaries. The whole period,

from the middle of Elizabeth's reign to the close of the reign of Charles I, comprises a space of little more than half a century, within which time nearly all that we have of excellence in serious dramatic composition was produced, if we except the Samson Agonistes of Milton."

Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, afterwards Earl of Dorset; and Thomas Norton

Gorboduc: a Tragedy [*Spec. Dram. Poets*, p. 5].—"The style of this old play is stiff and cumbersome, like the dresses of its times. There may be flesh and blood underneath, but we cannot get at it. Sir Philip Sidney has praised it for its morality. One of its authors might easily furnish that. Norton was an associate to Hopkins, Sternhold, and Robert Wisdom, in the Singing Psalms. I am willing to believe that Lord Buckhurst supplied the more vital parts. The chief beauty in the extract is of a secret nature. Marcella obscurely intimates that the murdered prince Porrex and she had been lovers."

Thomas Kyd

The Spanish Tragedy; or, Hieronimo is mad again: a Tragedy [*S. D. P.*, p. 12].—"These scenes [of Hieronimo's madness], which are the very salt of the play (which without them is but a caput mortuum, such another piece of flatness as Locrine), Hawkins, in his re-publication of this tragedy, has thrust out of the text into the notes; as omitted in the second Edition, 'printed for Ed. Allde, amended of such gross blunders as passed in the first:' and thinks them to have been *foisted in by the players*.—A late discovery at Dulwich College has ascertained that two sundry payments were made to Ben Jonson by the Theatre for furnishing additions to Hieronimo. See last Edition of Shakspeare by Reed. There is nothing in the undoubted plays of Jonson which would authorize us to suppose that he could have supplied the scenes in question. I should suspect the agency of some 'more potent spirit'. Webster might have furnished them. They are full of that wild solemn preternatural cast of grief which bewilders us in the Duchess of Malfy."

George Peele

The Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe, with the Tragedy of Absalom [*S. D. P.*, p. 15].—[*Bethsabe, with her maid, bathing. She sings: and David sits above viewing her.*] "There is more of the same stuff, but I suppose the reader has a surfeit; especially as this Canticle of David's has never been suspected to contain any pious sense couched underneath it, whatever his Son's may. The Kingly bower 'seated in hearing of a hundred streams', is the best of it."

Christopher Marlowe

Lust's Dominion, or the Lascivious Queen [*S. D. P.*, p. 16].—"Kit Marlowe, as old Isaac Walton assures us, made that *smooth song* which begins 'Come live with me and be my love'. The same romantic invitations 'in folly ripe in reason rotten', are given by the queen in the play, and the lover in the ditty. He talks of 'beds of roses, buckles of gold':

> Thy silver dishes for thy meat,
> *As precious as the Gods do eat,*
> Shall on an ivory table be
> Prepar'd each day for thee and me.

"The lines in the Extract have a luscious smoothness in them, and they were the most temperate which I could pick out of this Play. The rest is in king Cambyses' vein; rape, and murder, and superlatives; 'huffing braggart puft' lines, such as the play-writers anterior to Shakespeare are full of, and Pistol 'but coldly imitates'. —*Blood* is made as light of in some of these old Dramas as *money* in a modern Sentimental Comedy; and as *this* is given away till it reminds us that it is nothing but counters, so *that* is spilt till it affects us no more than its representative, the paint of the property-man in the theatre."

Joseph Cooke

Green's Tu Quoque: or, The City Gallant [*S. D. P.*, p. 55].—*Men more niggardly of their love than women* [*Speech of eighteen lines* beginning, 'Thrice happy days they were, and too soon gone,' &c.]. —"This is so like Shakspeare, that one seems almost to remember it as a speech of Desdemona's upon perceiving an alteration in the behaviour of the Moor."

Thomas Dekker

The Honest Whore, Part II [*S. D. P.*, p. 65].—*The Happy Man* [*Twelve lines beginning*, 'He that makes gold his wife, but not his whore,' &c.].—"The turn of this is the same with Iago's definition of a Deserving Woman: 'She that was ever fair and never proud,' &c. The matter is superior."

Satiro-Mastix: or, The Untrussing of the Humorous Poet [*ibid.*, p. 69].—*Cælestina's Father, to save her honor, gives her a poisonous mixture which she swallows.*—"The beauty and force of this scene are much diminished to the reader of the entire play, when he comes to find that this solemn preparation is but a sham contrivance of the father's, and the potion which Cælestina swallows nothing more than a sleeping-draught; from the effects of which she is to awake in due time, to the surprise of her husband, and the great mirth and edification of the King and his courtiers. As

Hamlet says, they do but 'poison in jest'.—The sentiments are worthy of a real martyrdom, and an Appian sacrifice in earnest."

John Marston

Antonio's Revenge [*S. D. P.*, p. 77).—*Andrugio's Ghost speaks:* 'Mayst thou be twined with the soft'st embrace Of clear eternity.'—"'To lie immortal in the arms of Fire.' Browne's Religio Medici. Of the punishments in hell."

The Malcontent [*ibid.*, p. 79].—"Place for a Penitent: 'There Usherless the wind comes in and out,' &c.—*i.e.* without the ceremony of an Usher to give notice of its approach, as is usual in Courts. As fine as Shakspeare: 'the bleak air thy boisterous Chamberlain.'"

What You Will [*ibid.*, p. 84].—'Venice state Where merchants guild the top.'—"'Her whose merchant Sons were Kings.' Collins."

George Chapman

Bussy D'Ambois [*S. D. P.*, p. 89].—*Nuntius*: 'I wish they had been spirits; That the ne'er-shutting wounds, they needs must open, Might as they open'd shut, and never kill.'—"One can hardly believe but that these lines were written after Milton had described his *warring angels.*"

Byron's Tragedy [*ibid.*, p. 99].—"I have often thought that the vulgar misconception of Shakspeare, as of a wild irregular genius 'in whom great faults are compensated by great beauties', would be really true applied to Chapman. But there is no scale by which to balance such disproportionate subjects as the faults and beauties of a great genius. To set off the former with any fairness against the latter, the pain which they give us should be in some proportion to the pleasure which we receive from the other. As these transport us to the highest heaven, those should steep us in agonies infernal." [*Conclusion of note partly reprinted in* Works, 1818—Characters of Dramatic Poets, &c., p. 70 *above.*]

Thomas Heywood

The English Traveller [*S. D. P.*, p. 119].—*Shipwreck by Drink* ['All their brains Warm'd with the heat of wine . . . suddenly, Out of his giddy wildness, one conceives The room wherein they quaff'd to be a Pinnace . . . This conceiv'd, Each one begins to apprehend the danger . . . Fly, saith one, up to the main top and discover,' &c.]. "This piece of pleasant exaggeration (which for its life and humour, might have been told, or acted, by Petruchio himself) gave rise to the title of Cowley's Latin Play, Naufragium Joculare, and furnished the idea of the best scene in it." [*Opening sentence of the note partly reprinted in* Characters, &c., 1818. *See p.* 60 *above. In the same*

note, between the words in everything else *and* His ambition, &c., *Heywood's Preface to this play is printed and remarked upon as follows :*—]

"'If Reader thou hast of this play been an Auditor, there is less apology to be used by intreating thy patience. This Tragi-comedy (being 1 reserved amongst 220 in which I had either an entire hand or at the least a main finger) coming accidentally to the press, and I having intelligence thereof, thought it not fit that it should pass as filius populi, a Bastard without a father to acknowledge it: true it is that my plays are not exposed to the world in volumes, to bear the title of works (as others' [—He seems to glance at Ben Jonson.—*Author's footnote*]): one reason is that many of them, by shifting and change of companies, have been negligently lost. Others of them are still retained in the hands of some actors, who think it against their peculiar profit to have them come in print, and a third that it never was any great ambition in me to be in this kind voluminously read. All that I have further to say at this time is only this: Censure I entreat as favourably as it is exposed to thy view freely. Ever Studious of thy Pleasure and Profit, Th. Heywood.'

"Of the 220 pieces which he here speaks of having been concerned in, only 25, as enumerated by Dodsley, have come down to us, for the reasons assigned in the preface. The rest have perished, exposed to the casualties of a theatre. Heywood's ambition seems," &c.

The Late Lancashire Witches, by Th. Heywood and Rich. Broome [*ibid.*, p. 123].—*Mr. Generous by taking off a Bridle from a seeming Horse in his Stable, discovers it to be his Wife, who . . . is a Witch.*—"Compare this with a story in the Arabian Nights, where a man discovers his wife to be a *goul*."

William Rowley

All's Lost by Lust [*S. D. P.*, pp. 138, 141].—'Say that some rapine hand had pluck'd the bloom, Jacinta, like that flower, and ravish'd her,' &c.—"'Cropt this fair Rose,' &c.—*Otway.*" [2] *Vanquished Moor's address to the Sun*: 'Thy sons we are,' &c.—"Children of the Sun.'—*Zanga in the Revenge.*"

A New Wonder: A Woman Never Vext [*ibid.*, p. 147].—*Foster, a Merchant become bankrupt and in Prison for debt, is relieved by Robert, his disinherited Son, whom, not recognizing him, he blesses.*—"A blessing stolen at least as fairly as Jacob's was."

In his note on this play, reprinted in 1818 (p. 61 *above*), *Lamb observes that in modern drama distress* '*is never shewn in its essential properties*'. *To this remark he appends, in* 1808, *the following footnote :*—

"Guzman de Alfarache, in that good old book 'The Spanish Rogue', has summed up a few of the properties of poverty:—'That poverty,

which is not the daughter of the spirit, is but the mother of shame and reproach; it is a disreputation that drowns all the other good parts that are in man; it is a disposition to all kind of evil; it is man's most foe; it is a leprosy full of anguish; it is a way that leads unto hell; it is a sea wherein our patience is overwhelmed, our honor is consumed, our lives are ended, and our souls are utterly lost and cast away for ever. The poor man is a kind of money that is not current; the subject of every idle huswive's chat; the offscum of the people; the dust of the street, first trampled under foot and then thrown on the dunghill; in conclusion, the poor man is the rich man's ass. He dineth with the last, fareth of the worst, and payeth dearest: his sixpence will not go so far as a rich man's threepence; his opinion is ignorance; his discretion foolishness; his suffrage scorn; his stock upon the common, abused by many and abhorred of all. If he come in company, he is not heard; if any chance to meet him, they seek to shun him; if he advise, though never so wisely, they grudge and murmur at him; if he work miracles, they say he is a witch; if virtuous, that he goeth about to deceive; his venial sin is a blasphemy; his thought is made treason; his cause, be it never so just, it is not regarded; and to have his wrongs righted, he must appeal to that other life. All men crush him; no man favoreth him; there is no man that will relieve his wants; no man that will comfort him in his miseries; nor no man that will bear him company, when he is all alone, and oppressed with grief. None help him; all hinder him; none give him, all take from him; he is debtor to none, and yet must make payment to all. O the unfortunate and poor condition of him that is poor, to whom even the very hours are sold, which the clock striketh, and pays custom for the sun-shine in August.' "

Thomas Middleton

Women beware Women [*S. D. P.*, p. 155].—*Livia, the Duke's creature, cajoles a poor Widow, that she may get her Daughter-in-Law into her trains, to serve the Duke's pleasure.*—"This is one of those scenes which has the air of being an immediate transcript from life. Livia the 'good neighbour' is as real a creature as one of Chaucer's characters. She is such another jolly Housewife as the Wife of Bath."

Wm. Rowley, Th. Decker, John Ford, &c.

The Witch of Edmonton [*S. D. P.*, p. 175].—*Mother Sawyer* (*before she turns Witch*) *alone*: 'Why should the envious World Throw all their scandalous malice upon me? . . . Some call me Witch, And . . . go about to teach me how to be one . . . This they enforce upon me; and in part Make me to credit it.'—"This Soliloquy antici-

pates all that Addison has said in the conclusion of the 117th Spectator."

Cyril Tourneur

The Atheist's Tragedy [*S. D. P.*, p. 181].—*Description of a Drowned Soldier.*—"This way of description which seems unwilling ever to leave off, weaving parenthesis within parenthesis, was brought to its height by Sir Philip Sidney. He seems to have set the example to Shakspeare. Many beautiful instances may be found all over the Arcadia. These bountiful Wits always give full measure, pressed down, and running over."

The Revenger's Tragedy [*ibid.*, p. 183].—*Vindici*: 'See, ladies, with false forms You deceive men, but cannot deceive worms.'—"The male and female Skeleton in Gondibert, is the finest lecture of mortification which has been read from bones.

> This dismal gallery, lofty, long and wide,
> Was hung with Skeletons of every kind;
> Human, and all that learned human pride
> Thinks made to obey man's high immortal mind.
> Yet on that wall hangs He, too, who so thought;
> And She, dried by Him, whom that He obeyed."

John Webster

The Devil's Law Case [*S. D. P.*, p. 199].—*Contarino challenges Ercole to fight for . . . Jolenta, whom they both love.*—"I have selected this scene as the model of a well-managed and gentlemanlike difference."

The White Devil: or, Vittoria Corombona [*ibid.*, p. 220].—"The Author's Dedication to this Play is so modest, yet so conscious of self-merit withal, he speaks so frankly of the deservings of others, and by implication insinuates his own deserts so ingenuously, that I cannot forbear inserting it, as a specimen how a man may praise himself gracefully and commend others without suspicion of envy.

'To the Reader.

'In publishing this Tragedy, I do but challenge to myself that liberty which other men have taken before me; not that I affect praise by it, for *nos hæc novimus esse nihil*; only since it was acted in so open and black a theatre, that it wanted (that which is the only grace and setting-out of a tragedy) a full and understanding auditory; and that, since that time, I have noted, most of the people that come to that play-house resemble those ignorant asses (who visiting stationers shops, their use is not to enquire for good books, but new books) I present it to the general view with this confidence,

Nec rhonchos metues maligniorum,
Nec scombris tunicas dabis molestas.

If it be objected this is no true dramatic poem, I shall easily confess it, *non potes in nugas dicere plura meas, ipse ego quam dixi*; willingly, and not ignorantly, have I faulted. For should a man present, to such an auditory, the most sententious tragedy that ever was written, observing all the critical laws, as height of style, and gravity of person, inrich it with the sententious chorus, and, as it were, enliven death, in the passionate and weighty Nuntius: yet after all this divine rapture, *O dura messorum ilia*, the breath that comes from the uncapable multitude is able to poison it; and ere it be acted, let the author resolve to add to every scene this of Horace:

—Hæc hodie porcis comedenda relinques.

'To those who report I was a long time in finishing this Tragedy, I confess, I do not write with a goose-quill wing'd with two feathers; and if they will needs make it my fault, I must answer them with that of Euripides to Alcestides, a tragic writer: Alcestides objecting that Euripides had only, in three days, composed three verses, whereas himself had written three hundred: Thou tell'st truth (quoth he); but here's the difference, thine shall only be read for three days, whereas mine shall continue three ages.

'Detraction is the sworn friend to ignorance: for mine own part, I have ever truly cherish'd my good opinion of other men's worthy labours, especially of that full and heighten'd stile of Master Chapman, the labor'd and understanding works of Master Jonson, the no less worthy composures of the both worthily excellent Master Beaumont and Master Fletcher; and lastly (without wrong last to be named) the right happy and copious industry of Master Shakspeare, Master Decker, and Master Heywood, wishing what I write may be read by their light; protesting that, in the strength of mine own judgment, I know them so worthy, that tho' I rest silent in my own work, yet to most of theirs I dare (without flattery) fix that of Martial: *non norunt hæc monumenta mori.*'"

The Lover's Melancholy [*ibid.*, p. 236].—*Contention of a Bird and a Musician.*—"This story, which is originally to be met with in Strada's Prolusions, has been paraphrased in rhyme by Crashaw, Ambrose Phillips, and others: but none of those versions can at all compare for harmony and grace with this blank verse of Ford's: It is as fine as anything in Beaumont and Fletcher; and almost equals the strife which it celebrates."

'Tis Pity She's a Whore [*ibid.*, pp. 245, 251].—"The good Friar in this Play is evidently a Copy of Friar Lawrence in Romeo and Juliet. He is the same kind Physician to the Souls of his young Charges; but he has more desperate Patients to deal with.—Sir Thomas Browne in the last Chapter of his Enquiries into Vulgar

and Common Errors, rebukes such Authors as have chosen to relate prodigious and nameless Sins. The Chapter is entitled, *Of some Relations whose Truth we fear.* His reasoning is solemn and fine.—'Lastly, as there are many Relations whereto we cannot assent, and make some doubt thereof, so there are divers others whose verities we fear, and heartily wish there were no truth therein. Many other accounts like these we meet sometimes in History, scandalous to Christianity, and even unto humanity; whose not only verities but relations honest minds do deprecate. For of sins heteroclital, and such as want either name or precedent, there is ofttimes a sin even in their histories. We desire no records of such enormities; sins should be accounted new, that so they may be esteemed monstrous. They omit of monstrosity, as they fall from their rarity; for men count it venial to err with their forefathers, and foolishly conceive they divide a sin in its society. The pens of men may sufficiently expatiate without these singularities of villainy: for, as they increase the hatred of vice in some, so do they enlarge the theory of wickedness in all. And this is one thing that may make latter ages worse than were the former: for the vicious examples of ages past, poison the curiosity of these present, affording a hint of sin unto seduceable spirits, and soliciting those unto the imitation of them, whose heads were never so perversely principled as to invent them. In things of this nature silence commendeth History; 'tis the veniable part of things lost, wherein there must never rise a Pancirollus[1] nor remain any register but that of Hell.'"

Ben Jonson

The New Inn: or, The Light Heart [*S. D. P.*, p. 326].—"These and the preceding extracts may serve to shew the poetical fancy and elegance of mind of the supposed rugged old Bard. A thousand beautiful passages might be adduced from those numerous court masques and entertainments which he was in the daily habit of furnishing, to prove the same thing. But they do not come within my plan. That which follows [from *The Alchemist*] is a specimen of that talent for comic humour, and the assemblage of ludicrous images, on which his reputation chiefly rests. It may serve for a variety after so many serious extracts." [*See last sentence of note on* Poetaster, Characteristics, &c., *p.* 68 *above.*]

Francis Beaumont

The Triumph of Love [*S. D. P.*, p. 346].—*Violanta is attended in Childbed by her mother.*—"Violanta's prattle is so very pretty, and so natural *in her situation,* that I could not resist giving it a place.

[1] Who wrote *De Antiquis Deperditis,* or Of the Lost Inventions of Antiquity.

Juno Lucina was never invoked with more elegance. Pope has been praised for giving dignity to a game at cards. It required at least as much address to ennoble a lying-in."

Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher

Philaster.—In the note on this play reprinted in 1818 *Lamb refers to Donne's Elegy. As the poem is printed at length in the note of* 1808 *it is given here.* *See pp.* 71–2, *above.*

Elegy

By our first strange and fatal interview,
By all desires which thereof did ensue,
By our long striving hopes, by that remorse
Which my words' masculine persuasive force
Begot in thee, and by the memory
Of hurts, which spies and rivals threatned me,
I calmly beg. But by thy father's wrath,
By all pains which want and divorcement hath,
I conjure thee; and all the oaths, which I
And thou have sworn to seal joint constancy,
I here unswear, and overswear them thus:
Thou shalt not love by means so dangerous.
Temper, O fair love, love's impetuous rage;
Be my true mistress, not my feigned page.
I'll go, and, by thy kind leave, leave behind
Thee, only worthy to nurse in my mind
Thirst to come back; O, if thou die before,
My soul from other lands to thee shall soar.
Thy (else almighty) beauty cannot move
Rage from the seas, nor thy love teach them love,
Nor tame wild Boreas' harshness; thou hast read
How roughly he in pieces shivered
The fair Orithea, whom he swore he lov'd.
Fall ill or good, 'tis madness to have prov'd
Dangers unurg'd; feed on this flattery,
That absent lovers one in th' other be.
Dissemble nothing, not a boy, nor change
Thy body's habit, nor mind; be not strange
To thyself only. All will spy in thy face
A blushing womanly discovering grace.
Richly cloath'd apes are called apes, and as soon
Eclips'd as bright we call the moon the moon.
Men of France, changeable camelions,
Spittles of diseases, shops of fashions,
Lives' fuellers, and the rightest company
Of players which upon the world's stage be,

Will too too quickly know thee; and alas,
Th' indifferent Italian, as we pass
His warm land, well content to think thee page,
Will hunt thee with such lust, and hideous rage,
As Lot's fair guests were vext. But none of these,
Nor spungy Aydroptique Dutch shall thee displease,
If thou stay here. O stay here; for, for thee
England is only a worthy gallery,
To walk in expectation, till from thence
Our greatest king call thee to his presence.
When I am gone, dream me some happiness;
Nor let thy looks our long-hid love confess;
Nor praise, nor dispraise me, nor bless, nor curse,
Openly love's force; nor in bed fright thy nurse
With midnights' startings, crying out oh, oh,
Nurse, O, my love is slain, I saw him go
O'er the white Alps alone; I saw him, I,
Assail'd, fight, taken, stabb'd, bleed, fall, and die.
Augur me better chance, except dread Jove
Think it enough for me to have had thy love.

JOHN FLETCHER

Love's Pilgrimage [*S. D. P.*, p. 392].—*Leocadia leaves her Father's house, disguised in man's apparel, to travel in search of Markantonio to whom she has been contracted*, &c.—"This is one of the most pleasing if not the most shining scenes in Fletcher. All is sweet, natural, and unforced. It is a copy which we may suppose Massinger to have profited by the studying."

The Two Noble Kinsmen [*ibid.*, p. 409].—"Fletcher is said to have been assisted in this Play by Shakspeare."—*Palamon and Arcite . . . derive consolation from . . . each other's company in prison* (p. 419).—"This scene bears indubitable marks of Fletcher: the two which precede it [*Three Queens seek redress from Theseus: Love between Emilia and Flavia*] give strong countenance to the tradition that Shakspeare had a hand in this play. The same judgment may be formed of the death of Arcite, and some other passages, not here given. They have a luxuriance in them which strongly resembles Shakspeare's manner in those parts of his plays where, the progress of the interest being subordinate, the poet was at leisure for description. I might fetch instances from Troilus and Timon. That Fletcher should have copied Shakspeare's manner through so many entire scenes (which is the theory of Mr. Steevens) is not very probable, that he could have done it with such facility is to me not certain. His ideas moved slow; his versification, though sweet, is tedious, it stops every moment; he lays line upon line, making up one after the other, adding image to image so deliberately that we see where they join: Shakspeare mingles everything, he

runs line into line, embarrasses sentences and metaphors; before one idea has burst its shell another is hatched and clamorous for disclosure. If Fletcher wrote some scenes in imitation, why did he stop? or shall we say that Shakspeare wrote the other scenes in imitation of Fletcher? that he gave Shakspeare a curb and a bridle, and that Shakspeare gave him a pair of spurs: as Blackmore and Lucan are brought in exchanging gifts in the Battle of the Books?"

Philip Massinger

The City Madam [*S. D. P.*, p. 422].—"This bitter satire against the city women for aping the fashions of the court ladies must have been peculiarly gratifying to the females of the Herbert family and the rest of Massinger's noble patrons and patronesses."

The Picture [*ibid.*, p. 430].—*Matthias, a knight of Bohemia, going to the wars; in parting with his wife, shews her substantial reasons why he should go.*—"The good sense, rational fondness, and chastised feeling, of this dialogue, make it more valuable than many of those scenes in which this writer has attempted a deeper passion and more tragical interest. Massinger had not the higher requisites of his art in any thing like the degree in which they were possessed by Ford, Webster, Tourneur, Heywood, and others. He never shakes or disturbs the mind with grief. He is read with composure and placid delight. He wrote with that equability of all the passions, which made his English style the purest and most free from violent metaphors and harsh constructions, of any of the dramatists who were his contemporaries."

James Shirley

The Brothers [*S. D. P.*, pp. 477, 478].—*Felisarda:* 'One dead that lov'd not me? this carries, sir, in nature No killing sound.'—"Like the reply of Manoah in Samson Agonistes: 'Sad, but not saddest, the desolation of a hostile city.'"—*Francisco:* 'If my father now . . . would leave his dwelling And visit this coarse orb again.'—"'Dirty Planet.' *Sterne.*"

Lady of Pleasure [*ibid.*, p. 484].—*Sir Thomas Bornewell expostulates with his lady on her extravagance*, &c.—"This dialogue is in the very spirit of the recriminating scenes between Lord and Lady Townley in the Provoked Husband. It is difficult to believe, but it must have been Vanbrugh's prototype."

Specimens from the Writings of Fuller, p. 142.—In *The Indicator*, Jan. 3, 1821, the two following passages from Fuller, with the accompanying footnote, appear, evidently contributed by Lamb, in one of whose Commonplace Books Mr. Lucas found them. They first appear as Lamb's in Mr. Lucas's volume of the *Miscellaneous Prose*, 1903.

'Gunpowder Plot

'Some days before the fatal stroke should be given, Master Keys [a conspirator] being at Tichmersh, in Northamptonshire, at the house of Mr. Gilbert Pickering, his brother-in-law (but of a different religion, as a true Protestant), suddenly whipped out his sword, and in merriment made many offers therewith at the heads, necks, and sides, of many gentlemen and gentlewomen then in the company. This then was taken as a mere frolic, and for the present passed accordingly; but afterwards, when the treason was discovered, such as remembered his gestures, thought thereby he did act what he intended to do (if the plot had took effect) hack and hew, kill and slay, all eminent persons of a different religion from themselves.—*Fuller's Church History.*

'Burning of Heretics

'Indeed such burning of heretics much startled common people pitying all in pain, and prone to asperse justice itself with cruelty, because of the novelty and hideousness of the punishment. And the purblind eyes of vulgar judgments looked only at what was next to them (the suffering itself), which they beheld with compassion, not minding the demerit of the guilt which deserved the same. Besides, such being unable to distinguish betwixt constancy and obstinacy, were ready to entertain good thoughts even of the opinions of those heretics, who sealed them so manfully with their blood. Wherefore King James [the First] politickly preferred, that heretics hereafter,[a] thus condemned, should silently and privately waste themselves away in the prison, rather than to grace them, and amuse others, with the solemnity of a public execution, which in popular judgments usurped the honour of a persecution.—*Fuller's Church History.*'

Confessions of a Drunkard, p. 168.—The *editio princeps* of this essay was traced by the present editor in 1902: see 'Lamb and the

[a] Positively one is at a loss which to admire most in this passage; the tender mercies of the King, or the regretful look which this old Divine seems to have cast back upon the extinguished fires of Smithfield. Through all the coyness of the confession, and the little more than hints which he broaches on this delicate subject, it is easy to discover, that those smothered brands had left as strong a relish and savor of fire in his nostrils, as the odour of the old fleshpots did upon the palates of the rebellious manna-sick Jews. He would fain be blowing up the dead coals again, though he offers at it reluctantly, and lights the pyre (as the ancients did in their funeral rites) with averted eyes. Yet Fuller appears to have been a humane kind-hearted man (where heretics were not concerned); and could see the enormity of 'hacking and hewing', 'killing and slaying' persons of an 'opposite faith,' when that faith was his own.—*Note by Lamb.*

Utilitarians,' *Athenæum*, No. 3903, p. 225 (Aug. 16, 1902). The text of 1814–18 agrees substantially with that of 1822. To the reprint of 1822 (*London Mag.*, vol. vi, p. 117, Aug. 1822) the following note, evidently by Lamb, was added:—

'*Reprints of* Elia.—Many are the sayings of Elia, painful and frequent his lucubrations, set forth for the most part (such his modesty!) without a name, scattered about in obscure periodicals and forgotten miscellanies. From the dust of some of these, it is our intention, occasionally, to revive a Tract or two, that shall seem worthy of a better fate; especially at a time like the present, when the pen of our industrious Contributor, engaged in a laborious digest of his recent Continental Tour, may haply want the leisure to expatiate in more miscellaneous speculations. We have been induced, in the first instance, to re-print a Thing, which he put forth in a friend's volume some years since, entitled the Confessions of a Drunkard, seeing that Messieurs the Quarterly Reviewers have chosen to embellish their last dry pages with fruitful quotations therefrom; adding, from their peculiar brains, the gratuitous affirmation, that they have reason to believe that the describer (in his delineations of a drunkard forsooth!) partly sate for his own picture. The truth is, that our friend had been reading among the Essays of a contemporary, who has perversely been confounded with him, a paper in which *Edax* (or the *Great Eater*) humorously complaineth of an inordinate appetite; and it struck him, that a better paper—of deeper interest, and wider usefulness—might be made out of the imagined experiences of a *Great Drinker*. Accordingly he set to work, and with that mock fervor, and counterfeit earnestness, with which he is too apt to over-realise his descriptions, has given us—a frightful picture indeed—but no more resembling the man *Elia*, than the fictitious *Edax* may be supposed to identify itself with Mr. L., its author. It is indeed a compound extracted out of his long observations of the effects of drinking upon all the world about him; and this accumulated mass of misery he hath centered (as the custom is with judicious essayists) in a single figure. We deny not that a portion of his own experiences may have passed into the picture (as who, that is not a washy fellow, but must at some times have felt the after-operation of a too generous cup?)—but then how heightened! how exaggerated!—how little within the sense of the Review, where a part, in their slanderous usage, must be understood to stand for the whole!—but it is useless to expostulate with this Quarterly slime, brood of Nilus, watery heads with hearts of jelly, spawned under the sign of Aquarius, incapable of Bacchus, and therefore cold, washy, spiteful, bloodless.——Elia shall string them up one day, and show their colours—or rather how colourless and vapid the whole fry—when he putteth forth his long promised, but unaccountably hitherto delayed, "Confessions of a Water-drinker."'

Recollections of Christ's Hospital, p. 177.—In *The Gentleman's Magazine*, June, 1813, this essay opened with the three following paragraphs which, as merely occasional, were omitted in 1818:—

'A great deal has been said about the Governors of this Hospital abusing their right of presentation, by presenting the children of opulent parents to the Institution. This may have been the case in an instance or two; and what wonder, in an establishment consisting, in town and country, of upwards of a thousand boys! But I believe there is no great danger of an abuse of this sort ever becoming very general. There is an old quality in human nature, which will perpetually present an adequate preventive to this evil. While the coarse blue coat and the yellow hose shall continue to be the costume of the school (and never may modern refinement innovate upon the venerable fashion!) the sons of the Aristocracy of this country, cleric or laic, will not often be obtruded upon this seminary.

'I own, I wish there was more room for such complaints. I cannot but think that a sprinkling of the sons of respectable parents among them has an admirable tendency to liberalize the whole mass; and that to the great proportion of Clergymen's children in particular which are to be found among them it is owing, that the foundation has not long since degenerated into a mere Charity-school, as it must do, upon the plan so hotly recommended by some reformists, of recruiting its ranks from the offspring of none but the very lowest of the people.

'I am not learned enough in the history of the Hospital to say by what steps it may have departed from the letter of its original charter; but believing it, as it is at present constituted, to be a great practical benefit, I am not anxious to revert to first principles, to overturn a positive good, under pretence of restoring something which existed in the days of Edward the Sixth, when the face of every thing around us was as different as can be from the present. Since that time the opportunities of instruction to the very lowest classes (of as much instruction as may be beneficial and not pernicious to them) have multiplied beyond what the prophetic spirit of the first suggester of this charity[a] could have predicted, or the wishes of that holy man have even aspired to. There are parochial schools, and Bell's and Lancaster's, with their arms open to receive every son of ignorance, and disperse the last fog of uninstructed darkness which dwells upon the land. What harm, then, if in the heart of this noble City there should be left one receptacle, where parents of rather more liberal views, but whose time-straitened circumstances do not admit of affording their children that better sort of education which they themselves, not without cost

[a] Bishop Ridley, in a Sermon preached before King Edward the Sixth.

to their parents, have received, may without cost send their sons ? For such Christ's Hospital unfolds her bounty. To comfort,' &c.

On the Melancholy of Tailors, p. 217.—In the text of 1814 the sixteenth paragraph runs as follows :—

'I think, then, that they may be reduced to three, omitting some subordinate ones ; viz.

> The sedentary habits of the tailor.—
> Something peculiar in his diet.—
> Mental perturbation from a sense of reproach, &c. —

And at the end of the article, as it now stands, came the following paragraphs :—

'Thirdly, and lastly, *mental perturbation, arising from a sense of shame* ; in other words, *that painful consciousness which he always carries about with him, of lying under a sort of disrepute in popular estimation.* It is easy to talk of despising public opinion, of its being unworthy the attention of a wise man, &c. The theory is excellent ; but, somehow, in practice

> still the world prevails and its dread laugh.

'Tailors are men (it is well if so much be allowed them,) and as such, it is not in human nature not to feel sore at being misprized, undervalued, and made a word of scorn.[a] I have often racked my brains to discover the grounds of this unaccountable prejudice which is known to exist against a useful and industrious body of men. I confess I can discover none, except in the sedentary posture, before touched upon, which from long experience has been found by these artists to be the one most convenient for the exercise of their vocation. But I would beg the more stirring and loco-motive part of the community, to whom the quiescent state of the tailor furnishes a perpetual fund of rudeness, to consider, that in the mere action of *sitting* (which they make so merry with) there is nothing necessarily ridiculous. That, in particular, it is the posture best suited to contemplation. That it is that, in which the hen

[a] It is notorious that to call a man a *tailor*, is to heap the utmost contempt upon him which the language of the streets can convey. *Barber's clerk* is an appellative less galling than this. But there is a word, which, though apparently divested of all ill meaning, has for some people a far deeper sting than either. It is the insulting appellation of *governor*, with which a black-guard, not in anger, but in perfect good will, salutes your second-rate gentry, persons a little above his own cut. He rarely bestows it upon the topping gentry of all, but reserves it for those of a rank or two above his own, or whose garb is rather below their rank. It is a word of approximation. A friend of mine will be melancholy a great while after, from being saluted with it. I confess I have not altogether been unhonoured with it myself.

(a creature of all others best fitted to be a pattern of careful provision for a family) performs the most beautiful part of her maternal office. That it is that, in which judges deliberate, and senators take counsel. That a Speaker of the House of Commons at a debate, or a Lord Chancellor over a suit, will oftentimes *sit* as long as many tailors. Lastly, let these scoffers take heed, lest themselves, while they mock at others, be found " sitting in the seat of the scornful." '

Miss Kelly at Bath, p. 235.—In *The Examiner*, Dec. 20, 1818, the following note, rightly identified as Lamb's by Mr. E. V. Lucas (*Works of C. and M. L.*, vol. vii, p. 981), follows a signed notice by Hunt of Kenney's *A Word for the Ladies* :—

' It is not without a feeling of pain that we observed Miss KELLY among the *spectators* on the first night of the new comedy. What does she do before the curtain ? She should have been on the stage. With such youth, such talents,—

Those powers of pleasing, with that will to please,

it is too much that she should be forgotten, discarded, laid aside like an old fashion. It really is not yet the season for her " among the wastes of time to go ". Is it Mr. STEPHEN KEMBLE, or the Sub-Committee ; or what *heavy body* is it, which interposes itself between us and this light of the stage ? '

Falstaff's Letters, p. 243.—Independently of Southey's direct assertion, in a letter to Moxon dated Feb. 2, 1836, that Lamb collaborated with White in this book, there is internal evidence of his hand in its composition. Mr. Lucas thinks that ' Lamb's fingers certainly held the pen ' when the following *Dedication* was written. The *Preface*, which is here printed at length, shows traces still more distinct of Lamb's co-operation.

' DEDICATYONE

' To MASTER SAMUEL IRELAUNDE

' RIGHT CURTEIS AND ERUDITE SYRRE

' KNOWEN unto you it is whatte maner of menne there be in thys age, who deeme they doe mankynde mochel servyce, whan in theyre leud sorte they make mocke at trew scyence, whych consysteth for the most parte, it sholde seeme, in the notices we have lefte us of antiquitie. These be menne, who thinke scorne of payns-takeing Wights (like you or me) who from the mynes of remote tyme by dynte of toyle do brynge forthe to view the pretious golde and sylvere (wherein it may not be farre from our discourse to remarke after whatte fashyone the mynes I here discusse doe differ from mynes physic or natural). In as moche as these latter doe renderre uppe theyre treasures yette being rude, and (as menne comonly saien) in the oarre ; whereas those mynes intellectual,

abounden in a sorte of metal, whyche cometh forthe onmyngled wythe baser matter, and bearynge engraven onne it the marke and impresse, whyche to menne skylful in soche thynges, and candide, dothe notifie and assure its authenticitie. Peradventure, neede is I sholde here fetche instaunce from thatte trew myne and ryche vein of poesye dugge out in these last days by that younge Bristowyan, and whyche to all sound myndes dyd evidence a genuine byrthe. (Tho' there be, who stycke notte to affyrme that the antique Rowley was noe oder thanne the stryplinge Chatterton, therein erring.) Bote thys is a mayne digressyone from the matter in honde, tho' therein I stande notte alone, having notable exemplar in thatte famose Wight of Antiquitie, the Latine poet Uergilius (as Dan Chaucer 'clepeth him aryghte, whom the mincynge mouthe of after tymes mys-nameth Virgil). Alsoe if neede were, I might here cite the exemplar of thatte grete Clerke himselfe, of whom his pupil Spenser wele affyrmeth thatte he is a " Well of Englyshe ondefyled ". After thys fashyone he speaketh. And now letten us come forthwithe to the main subjecte of our discourse.

'Those rare gyftes of Fortuna to menne, the lyghtynge upon lost recordes, and the inventyone[a] of MS. have in thys oure daye been farre out-donne by thatte rare discoverie by yourselfe made. Tell me, curteis Syrre, was it by spade and by mattocke thatte you dyd fynde these goodlye thynges? Were those shrewde knaves caterers for you, who dyd fathome a grave for Mistresse Ophelia? Those madde rogues who dyd poke agaynste the scull of a droll Jesterre, thereby affordynge moche matter of mathematycale fonne for Master Laurence Sterne? Methinks you doe call to life agayne thatte swote swanne of Avonne, whose Songes dyd sounde so pleasaunt in the eares of thatte peerlesse Mayden Quene and renowned victrix of Spayne, Elizabeth. Bote by the pryce sette upon your labours by the wyttes of the age, it sholde seeme lamentable matter of facte, howe moche poesy, and the pryme phansies and conceipts of connynge menne are fallen into contempte in these the worldis last dayes. Natheless, Master Irelaunde, letten us not be fruitelesslye caste downe.—The tyme dothe faste approche, nay, even now is close at honde, when the overcharged cloudes of scepticysme muste incontinentlye vanish before convictione's serener Welkin, and Edmonde shall in vayne resume hys laboures. Arreste thyne eyne—looke backe atte the goodlye figure of the auntient Knighte—naye, looke notte cursorye, it is the impresse of a ryghte venerable picture traunsmitted downewardes throughe oure house forre foure hondredde yeares.—Seest thou notte the antique characteres ygraved onne the Belte? Doubtlesse they doe reflecte a lighte collaterale uponne thy clerkish manuscryptes;

[a] Inventyone, or discoverie, from the Latine verbe, invenio.

ande doubtlesse by a twofolde operatyone doe they confyrme unto the worlde by theyre evidence the truth of the Falstaffe Letteres. To conclude; the matter of facte (as soe it sholde seeme) muste be pleasaunt and gratefull untoe thee, Master Irelaunde, to know thatte in the dayes of the Fifth Henry an ancestor of thyne was a maker of Trunke Hose, or as it is spoken of in these moderne tymes, a maker of Pantaloones.

'Trustyng thatte posteritie shall yet remunerate us for oure undertakynges (whych are simylare) wythe a lyke portyone of laud and prayse, I doe commende thee unto thye beste fortunes.

'Thy fellow-labourer in the mynes of antiquitie,

'and moste humble servante to commande,

'* * * * * * *'

'PREFACE

'Of all the valuable remains of Antiquity, the world has ever especially patronised those, which any ways tend to develope the characters of men eminent in their day.—The Curate's Sermons we can subscribe to from motives of humanity to his Widow; not to hint at their utility, administered occasionally, as narcotics. A similar impulse, perhaps a fellow-feeling, endears us to the Author, whose taylor is importunate.—But the familiar papers, and epistolary tablets, of a man renown'd among his cotemporaries, famous through succeeding centuries, happy be his dole, who shall rescue from the Epicurean tooth of Vandal Moth accurs'd!—The Antiquarian shall ever present him the right hand of fellowship; nor less esteem the yellow colourings laid on their nibbled surface by the kindly hand of time, than the mellow hues, with which the same friendly touch hath perfected some undoubted work of Guido or the Caracci.

'I am happy in presenting the world with a series of most interesting manuscript letters, &c.—They were found by Mrs. Quickly, Landlady of the Boar Tavern in Eastcheap, in a private drawer, at the left hand corner of a walnut-tree escrutoire, the property of Sir John Falstaff, after the good Knight's death.—At Mrs. Quickly's demise, which happened in August, 1419, they devolved, among other Outlandish papers, such as leases, title-deeds, &c., to her heiress at law, an elderly maiden sister; who, unfortunately for all the world, and to my individual eternal sorrow and regret, of all the dishes in the culinary system, was fond of roast pig.

'A curse on her Epicurean guts, that could not be contented with plain mutton, like the rest of her Ancestors!

'Reader, whenever, as journeying onward in thy epistolary progress, a chasm should occur to interrupt the chain of events, I beseech thee blame not me, but curse the rump of roast pig. This maiden-sister, conceive with what pathos I relate it, absolutely made use of several, no doubt invaluable letters, to shade the

jutting protuberances of that animal from disproportionate excoriation in its circuitous approaches to the fire.

'My friend Mr. *****, decypherer of ancient records, on showing him the manuscripts, and communicating my misfortune, slily hinted at his possession of some curious yellow papers.—However gratified I might feel at this instance of his friendship, however practicable I might conceive it to forge the mere manual characters, how are the escapes, the bursts of humour, of Sir John Falstaff to be delineated, his quips, and his gybes? No, Sirs, I might as well attempt, (with every respect to Alchymists, Amalgamators, &c.—Gentlemen, I bow to you) I might as well attempt to incorporate Solar-essence with Epping-butter.

'It may be objected against the authenticity of my Manuscripts, that they do not appear in the proper garb of their age.—To this I answer, that I do not make them public for the gratification of the Virtuoso, but for the amusement of the whole world; three-fourths of whom are too far advanced in life, to commence their studies in the most noble science of antient orthography. Far be it from me to shrink from the investigation of the scholar, or the critic.—Gentlemen, my closet is open to you—I very respectfully entreat your entrance. From your convictions I anticipate, I already hear, the united commands of the whole world vibrate in my ear, to bring forward other Manuscripts in my possession; Manuscripts, which contain many very important traits, and features of character, in Sir John Falstaff, but lightly touched upon by Shakspere.—What an immense acquisition to the Theatres!

'I had once, indeed, thought of giving them a dramatic form, for the purpose of communicating them to the Manager of Covent-garden; but the splendid taste of the age, incessantly calling on him for gaudes and shews, the very nature of which must necessarily arrest his whole attention, I fear'd they might be laid on the shelf—'that Bourn whence no Traveller returns;' and thus, with other valuable writings, be lost to the world. Superadded to this, a species of delicacy I cannot describe, 'tis nearly allied to pride, forbad my parting with them unsolicited. Perhaps a respectful application from the Manager, Mr. Harris, through the medium of Mr. F****** or any other distinguished performer, might conduce—But really this is so delicate a subject, that——

'It may be asked how they came into my possession?—I beseech thee, good Mr. Inquisitive, urge not the question.—Of all the occupations subservient to the views of man, none was ever to me so vituperative, as that of a Publican.—What the Street-walker is in the flesh, that is the Publican in the spirit, amenable to the caprice of every unbridled passion.—And yet, that I should have emigrated from the loins of a Publican, be bred, no, not *bred*, born and begotten of a Publican! Whence can the fatality arise! Reader, the Manuscript came to me by direct inheritance.

'Master Quickly, Master Quickly, amid thy daily roar of subaltern base-born[a] revelry, thou art little conscious of the illustrious personages that once honoured thy roof;—of the memorials that yet remain of their being to an estranged branch of thy race. The names of *Falstaff, Hal, Corporal Bardolph,* are strange to thee.—I do not marvel: for they have ceased, Master Quickly, to be on thy score.—Yet if thy blood is not utterly degenerate, if any particle remains to thee of the dignity of our house, put thy pipe into thy mouth, and walk sedately with me.

'A sage writer remarks, tho' time obliterateth, yet not relentless in his ravages, he leaveth some slight traditionary token to sooth the memory of past times.

'Shut the door.—Thou art now, where Sir John was wont to solace himself, in the identical Pomegranate.[b] Doth not the Genius of the place silently rebuke thy pride, that hath taken a flight so far beneath thy ancestry?

'The Boar's-head, in days of yore the resort of every quality proper and handsome, to become a rendezvous for the many-specied scions of the mechanick-stock! The Pomegranate, ancient receptacle of illustrious Wits, Bloods, who 'Daff'd the world aside, and bid it pass', to be choak'd with the seeds of every baser plant! It is not well—— By the fat Friar's scalp of merry Sherwood, it is not well.

'Thy grandam, Master Quickly, was a Wight, in whom the culinary attainments of man delighted to reside. She mingled nectareous sack. Thou art more.—Thou art a pious householder.—In the twelfth hour of the night, when thy cattle, and the stranger, and the ass, and all that is within thy gate, are assembled to offer up their orisons, call thou aloud upon the indignant manes of the departed Knight—confess thy degeneracy—promise purgation of his polluted haunts, and if so his shade will be pacified, that the merry Sackbut shall supersede the clanking of pewter, throughout the Boar.—At such an hour, if there be any convexity in thy roofs, expect thou a solemn answer.

'I have yet a point to settle, and then I leave thee to the bustle of thy domiciliary regeneration.—Thou hast misused me damnably, Master Quickly.—Not Zeno with all his Stoics about him—not Job with all his oxen about him, would bear my wrongs patiently. Had I blasted the Boar's good name, had I libidinously approach'd mine hostess, and wound a recheat on thy brow, thou hadst some shadow of reason; but to maltreat a kind, philanthropick, well-disposed Gentleman, disinterestedly coming forward for the amusement of the whole world, all his own concerns stagnant! Oh! 'tis very foul and unmannered.—I desire thou wilt go to Mr. Robin-

[a] The Boar's-head in Eastcheap, now a common pot-house.
[b] A room so called in the Boar Tavern, which Sir John was partial to.

son's, and take six copies of this my publication, paying the full price for each, individually.

'Thou seest, I am incontinently prone to lenity, even to the very detriment of my fortunes. Canst thou imagine, that any other writer of my merits, elaborate, cogitabund, fanciful in the garnishment of a quaint conceit, and reeking with my disappointments, would be pacified with so trivial a concession? I look'd to have seen a smug, proper Gentleman step from his chair in the Pomegranate, and vote each member a set of the Knight's adventures.—I look'd I should have received ten pounds; and, by the Martyrdom of holy Polycarp, thou hast no more Club, than is compounded of labouring smiths, circumcis'd Anglo-Hebrews, and revolted apprentices; such a farrago of unhous'd Arabs, as Lazarus himself would have scorn'd consortance with.—Oh! thou hast much misus'd me—a' God's name, let the stable be cleansed—to work with Herculean brawn! To work! to work! to work!

'There is a certain description of writers, whose great volubility of genius cannot stop calmly and soberly to look behind ever and anon, and gather up the errors and absurdities of a warm imagination.—No—'tis too mechanical for your picked man of genius.—He blindly pushes forward for the goal, nor ever even steps aside, unless indeed, Atalanta-like, to catch at a Golden Apple. Cervantes seems to have been of this class; or he would certainly have never thought of mounting Dapple on Panza, (I beg Sancho's pardon, I mean) Panza on Dapple, when the rogue Gynes was at the same time bestride him a dozen miles distant.

'I thank Nature (I think it a blessing) for having cast me in a more phlegmatic mould.—Reader, the Preface is but short—look back.—If thou hast caught me tripping, if I am in ought accountable to thee, I promise to explain or rectify in my next edition.'

Letter to an Old Gentleman, &c., p. 275.—In *The London Magazine*, Dec., 1823, under 'The Lion's Head', is the following paragraph which may have been contributed by Lamb.

'The following admirable letter seems to refer to the observations on Kant, contained in the Opium Eater's Letters. Perhaps that acute logician may be able to discover its meaning: or if not, he may think it worth preserving as an illustration of Shakspeare's profound knowledge of character displayed in Ancient Pistol.

"Can Neptune sleep?—Is Willich dead?—Him who wielded the trident of Albion! Is it thus you trample on the ashes of my friend? All the dreadful energies of thought—all the sophistry of fiction and the triumphs of the human intellect are waving o'er his peaceful grave. 'He understood not Kant.' Peace then to the harmless invincible. I have long been thinking of presenting the world with a Metaphysical Dictionary—of elucidating Locke's romance.—I await with impatience Kant in English. Give me

that! Your letter has awakened me to a sense of your merits. Beware of squabbles; I know the literary infirmities of man. Scott rammed his nose against mortals—he grasped at death for fame to chaunt the victory.

" THINE.

"How is the Opium Eater?" '

Estimate of De Foe's Secondary Novels, p. 425.—Besides this estimate Walter Wilson prints, on p. 428, vol. iii, of his *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Daniel de Foe*, the following extract from a letter dated Dec. 16, 1822, addressed to him by Lamb:—'In the appearance of *truth*, in all the incidents and conversations that occur in them, they exceed any works of fiction I am acquainted with. It is perfect illusion. The *Author* never appears in these self-narratives (for so they ought to be called, or rather Autobiographies) but the *Narrator* chains us down to an implicit belief in every thing he says. There is all the minute detail of a log-book in it. Dates are painfully pressed upon the memory. Facts are repeated over and over in varying phrases, till you cannot chuse but believe them. It is like reading Evidence given in a Court of Justice. So anxious the story-teller seems that the truth should be clearly comprehended, that when he has told us a matter of fact, or a motive, in a line or two farther down he *repeats* it, with his favourite figure of speech, "I say," so and so—though he had made it abundantly plain before. This is in imitation of the common people's way of speaking, or rather of the way in which they are addressed by a master or mistress, who wishes to impress something upon their memories, and has a wonderful effect upon matter-of-fact readers. Indeed it is to such principally that he writes. His style is elsewhere beautiful, but plain and *homely*. Robinson Crusoe is delightful to all ranks and classes, but it is easy to see that it is written in phraseology peculiarly adapted to the lower conditions of readers; hence it is an especial favourite with seafaring men, poor boys, servant-maids, &c. His novels are capital kitchen-reading, while they are worthy from their deep interest to find a shelf in the Libraries of the wealthiest, and the most learned. His passion for *matter-of-fact narrative*, sometimes betrayed him into a long relation of common incidents which might happen to any man, and have no interest but the intense appearance of truth in them, to recommend them. The whole latter half, or two thirds, of Colonel Jack is of this description. The beginning of Colonel Jack is the most affecting natural picture of a young thief that was ever drawn. His losing the stolen money in the hollow of a tree, and finding it again when in despair, and then being in equal distress at not knowing how to dispose of it, and several similar touches in the early history of the Colonel, evince a deep knowledge of human nature; and, putting out of question the

superior *romantic* interest of the latter, in my mind very much exceed Crusoe. Roxana (1st edition) is the next in Interest, though he left out the best part of it [in] subsequent Editions, from a foolish hyper-criticism of his friend Southerne. But Moll Flanders, the account of the Plague, &c. &c. are all of one family, and have the same stamp of character.'

The South-Sea House, p. 472.—According to the key to the blanks and initials in *Elia* drawn up by Lamb for Pitman, his brother-clerk, at the India House, M— here stands for Maynard. The key is subjoined here for general reference :—

M.	Page 479	Maynard, hang'd himself.
G. D.	,, 483	George Dyer, Poet.
H.	,, 489	Hodges.
W.	,,	——
Dr. T—e.	,, 496	Dr. Trollope.
Th.	,, 497	Thornton.
S.	,, 497	Scott, died in Bedlam.
M.	,, 497	Maunde, dismiss'd school.
C. V. Le G. . . .	,, 498	Chs. Valentine Le Grice.
F.	,, 498	Favell ; left Cambrg. because he was asham'd of his father, who was a house-painter there.
Fr.	,, 498	Franklin, Gram^{r} Mast., Hertford.
T.	,, 498	Marmaduke Thompson.
K.	,, 503	Kenney, Dramatist. Author of *Raising Wind*, &c.
S. T. C.	,, 504	Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
Alice W—n. . . .	,, 505	Feigned (Winterton).
***	,, 506	No meaning.
****	,, 506	No meaning.
***	,, 506	No meaning.
Mrs. S.	,, 518	Mrs. Spinkes.
R.	,, 525	Ramsay, London Library, Ludg. St. ; now extinct.
Granville S. . . .	,, 525	Granville Sharp.
E. B.	,, 542	Edward Burney, half-brother of Miss Burney.
B.	,, 549	Braham, now a Xtian.
. ***. * . .	,, 564	Distrest Sailors.
J—ll.	,, 577	Jekyll.
Susan P.	,, 579	Susan Peirson.
R. N.	,, 584	Randal Norris, Subtreas^{r}, Inner Temple.
C.	,, 589	Coleridge.
F.	,, 592	Field.
B. F.	,, 601	Baron Field, brother of Frank.

Lord C. . . . . Page 603 Lord Camelford.
Sally W—r. . . . „ 606 Sally Winter.
J. W. . . . . „ 606 Jas. White, author of *Falstaff's Letters*.
St. L. . . . . „ 617 } No meaning.
B., Rector of— . . „ 617 }

The foregoing list, now amongst the papers of the late Alexander Ireland, is in Lamb's autograph, with the exception of the fourteenth and the twenty-first items ('Samuel Taylor Coleridge' and 'Granville Sharp'). Edward Burney, it may be added, was the sixth son of Richard Burney of Barborne Lodge near Worcester (b. 1760), and was therefore the cousin, not the half-brother, of Miss Burney (Madame D'Arblay).

Oxford in the Vacation, p. 483.—'. . unsettle my faith.' Here, in 1820, Lamb subjoins the following footnote :—

'There is something to me repugnant, at any time, in written hand. The text never seems determinate. Print settles it. I had thought of the Lycidas as of a full-grown beauty—as springing up with all its parts absolute—till, in an evil hour, I was shown the original written copy of it, together with the other minor poems of its author, in the Library of Trinity, kept like some treasure, to be proud of. I wish they had thrown them in the Cam, or sent them, after the latter cantos of Spenser, into the Irish Channel. How it staggered me to see the fine things in their ore! interlined, corrected! as if their words were mortal, alterable, displaceable at pleasure! as if they might have been otherwise, and just as good! as if inspiration were made up of parts, and those fluctuating, successive, indifferent! I will never go into the work-shop of any great artist again, nor desire a sight of his picture, till it is fairly off the easel; no, not if Raphael were to be alive again, and painting another Galatea.'

'. . . violence or injustice to him.'—p. 484. Here, in 1820, Lamb subjoins the following footnote :—

'Violence or injustice, certainly none, Mr. Elia. But you will acknowledge that the charming unsuspectingness of our friend has sometimes laid him open to attacks, which, though savouring (we hope) more of waggery than of malice—such is our unfeigned respect for G. D.—might, we think, much better have been omitted. Such was that silly joke of L., who, at the time the question of the Scotch Novels was first agitated, gravely assured our friend—who as gravely went about repeating it in all companies—that Lord Castlereagh had acknowledged himself to be the author of *Waverley! Note—not by Elia.*'

'. . . thy obtruded personal presence.'—p. 485. In 1820 the following paragraphs came in here :—

'D. commenced life, after a course of hard study in the "House

of pure Emanuel", as usher to a knavish fanatic schoolmaster at * * *, at a salary of eight pounds per annum, with board and lodging. Of this poor stipend, he never received above half in all the laborious years he served this man. He tells a pleasant anecdote that when poverty, staring out at his ragged knees, has sometimes compelled him, against the modesty of his nature, to hint at arrears, Dr. * * * would take no immediate notice, but, after supper, when the school was called together to even-song, he would never fail to introduce some instructive homily against riches, and the corruption of the heart occasioned through the desire of them—ending with "Lord, keep thy servants, above all things, from the heinous sin of avarice. Having food and raiment, let us therewithal be content. Give me Agar's wish,'—and the like;—which, to the little auditory, sounded like a doctrine full of Christian prudence and simplicity,—but to poor D. was a receipt in full for that quarter's demands at least.

'And D. has been under-working for himself ever since;—drudging at low rates for unappreciating booksellers,—wasting his fine erudition in silent corrections of the classics, and in those unostentatious but solid services to learning, which commonly fall to the lot of laborious scholars, who have not the art to sell themselves to the best advantage. He has published poems, which do not sell, because their character is inobtrusive like his own,—and because he has been too much absorbed in ancient literature, to know what the popular mark in poetry is, even if he could have hit it. And, therefore, his verses are properly, what he terms them, *crotchets;* voluntaries; odes to Liberty and Spring; effusions; little tributes and offerings, left behind him, upon tables and window-seats, at parting from friends' houses; and from all the inns of hospitality, where he has been courteously (or but tolerably) received in his pilgrimage. If his muse of kindness halt a little behind the strong lines in fashion in this excitement-craving age, his prose is the best of the sort in the world, and exhibits a faithful transcript of his own healthy, natural mind, and cheerful, innocent tone of conversation.'

Exception was taken to the foregoing passages by one William King, who sent a copy of *The London Magazine* (No. x) containing Lamb's essay to George Dyer, and subsequently, on hearing from Dyer in reply, addressed a protest either to the editor or to the writer of the article, which elicited the following rejoinder from Lamb, printed in the December number (xii) of the Magazine under the section entitled *The Lion's Head.* The upshot of the correspondence was that Lamb, when reprinting the essay in *Elia,* 1823, omitted the offending passages.

'Elia requests the Editor to inform W. K. that in his article on Oxford, under the initials G. D., it was his ambition to make more familiar to the public, a character, which, for integrity and single-heartedness, he has long been accustomed to rank among the best

patterns of his species. That, if he has failed in the end which he proposed, it was an error of judgment merely. That, if in pursuance of his purpose, he has drawn forth some personal peculiarities of his friend into notice, it was only from the conviction that the public, in living subjects especially, do not endure pure panegyric. That the anecdotes, which he produced, were no more than he conceived necessary to awaken attention to character, and were meant solely to illustrate it. That it is an entire mistake to suppose, that he undertook the character to set off his own wit or ingenuity. That, he conceives, a candid interpreter might find something intended, beyond a heartless jest. That G. D., however, having thought it necessary to disclaim the anecdote respecting Dr. ——, it becomes him, who never for a moment can doubt the veracity of his friend, to account for it from an imperfect remembrance of some story he heard long ago, and which, happening to tally with his argument, he set down too hastily to the account of G. D. That, from G. D.'s strong affirmations and proofs to the contrary, he is bound to believe it belongs to no part of G. D.'s biography. That the transaction, supposing it true, must have taken place more than forty years ago. That, in consequence, it is not likely to "meet the eye of many who might be justly offended".

'Finally, that what he has said of the Booksellers, referred to a period of many years, in which he has had the happiness of G. D.'s acquaintance; and can have nothing to do with any present or prospective engagements of G. D., with those gentlemen, to the nature of which he professes himself an entire stranger.'

George Dyer's reply to William King appeared in an article on Dyer and his friends printed in *The Mirror*, vol. xxxviii, 1841 :—

'Dear Sir,—I return you the 10th number of the *London Magazine* which, but for your kindness, might not, perhaps, have fallen in my way. What Elia says relating to G. D. of Clifford's Inn is very funny, and betrays no unkind intentions; and G. D. himself would have laughed at the humour, and must have blushed at the compliments, had not he been suddenly surprised at some remarks which made him both serious and sad.

'Elia, speaking of G. D.'s leaving the "House of pure Emmanuel!" —alluding, evidently, to a verse of the well-known old English ballad beginning:

> In the House of pure Emmanuel
> I had my education, &c.

—says, "he commenced life as usher to a knavish fanatic schoolmaster at——, at a salary of five [eight] pounds a year," and that "of this poor stipend he never received above half, in all the laborious years he served this man. He tells a pleasant anecdote when poverty, &c., compelled him to hint at arrears." Dr. —— took a certain course towards G. D., "which was a receipt in full

for that quarter's demands at least." In answer to this, the gentlemen with whom G. D. was connected at schools are now deceased, but as there are others still living, who knew under what circumstances these connexions were formed, they must consider the statement as illiberal and unjust. G. D. sends you the following counter-statement, every word of which you may be assured is strictly true.

'G. D. commenced life as usher to Dr. Grimwood, who kept a respectable academy at Dedham in the county of Essex, where many of the principal gentry of the county were and are still educated, and many of the scholars of that academy have received the first honours at the Universities. Dr. G. had been Fellow of Magdalen, Oxford, and the upper usher was, at the time, Fellow of Sydney, Cambridge; this latter place being preoccupied, that of under-usher fell, of course, to the lot of G. D., but, had he continued, it is probable he would have succeeded to the upper place; be that, however, as it may, his salary was so far from being what ELIA describes it, that out of it he was enabled to give £20 per annum to a most worthy person (his father) declining in years, who had every claim on his duty and affection. So far from Dr. Grimwood being in arrears during D.'s stay with him (which was only a twelvemonth), he thinks that he received his full salary before it was due. It was a point of honour that led to his determination to leave; and when he did leave (after a proposal from Dr. Grimwood to raise his salary if he would remain) it was with much concern and affection on both sides; and the above gentleman made G. D. a present of five guineas over and above his salary. It was at this school that G. D. (to borrow ELIA's expression) "commenced life"; afterwards he became the inmate of the Rev. Dr. Ryland, who kept an academy at Northampton, on much lower terms, and consequently his usher's salaries could not be very high; but D. was not properly in the full character of an usher here. All the places were occupied; he was a sort of supernumerary; it suited his convenience at the time to be there, and on the part of the Rev. Dr. R. it was an accommodation to the peculiar circumstances of G. D., who, if he did not in all things agree with this gentleman, found the situation very favourable to his own prevailing pursuits. It is true, he continued here longer than was at first intended by him, or than was expected by his part-employer; but G. D. is not aware that he made any regular agreements on the score of salary, and indeed, for the reasons just given, none such could have been made. It is true that D. might have looked for some remuneration, but the Rev. Dr. R. knew in what circumstances, and for what purposes, he came to him from the first; he knew that it had answered those purposes; he knew that he had studied that it should do so; he knew that he had pointed out to him resources, and if G. D. had not availed himself of those resources so much as this good gentleman thought he did, that was

certainly his own fault. Further, Mr. R. knew that G. D. had very kind and liberal friends. G. D. considers himself to this day as under great obligations to this gentleman, and whatever he may have at any time received from him was to be considered more as a gratuity than as a salary. To speak the truth, G. D. was in this latter situation rather in the character of a student than an usher.

'Mr. Ryland's terms for tuition were not only low, but his hand was apt to be liberal beyond his means; his peculiar situation as a very popular preacher in a particular line rendered his academy a sort of open house "to all the vagrant train". His ushers were commonly persons who had come to him under some peculiar difficulties, on whose gratitude he had even a claim; and if his own circumstances, for the reasons given, did not allow him to give large salaries, it was understood they had enjoyed advantages under him which were a full compensation for their services, so that some such prayer as ELIA, in his humourous way, alludes to, if even such had come from him, might have had in it something more just and good than ELIA is aware of.

'Dr. Ryland was a man of very extensive reading, eccentric, certainly, if ever man was, both as a reader, an author, and a man; his understanding possessed some strong features of character; his imagination would sometimes take no common flights; and some of his publications bear evidently these marks of his eccentricities; with the singular boldness of his remarks every one acquainted with him was well aware; and it is not improbable that even G. D. may, in some unguarded moment, have made a slight allusion to them; and this, perhaps, ELIA may have worked up in his farcical-poetical narrative. But you perceive, Sir, in reference to Dr. Grimwood, where he says D. "commenced life", not a word can be true. As to Dr. Ryland, D. recollects a circumstance which he will here mention:—A certain spark was once making himself merry with some of his peculiar sayings, when he was interrupted by the Rev. Robert Robinson (whose life I have published), and who was himself a truly great man: "Sir, let me tell you, if you take away eleven parts out of twelve from Dr. Ryland, there will still be left a greater man than yourself." This, however, is not here mentioned as being applicable to ELIA; by no means. ELIA is unquestionably a great wit, and may be a great man; but he is certainly a very different man from the spark alluded to. There are some other remarks in the witty ELIA'S communication to *The London Magazine* relative to G. D. (without *malice prepense* on his part) calculated to do mischief. ELIA describes G. D. as underworking for himself, "drudging at low rates." Is this said out of mere fun, or to excite pity towards poor D.? If the latter, he should know that pity is often a poor consoler, and very frequently a bad friend. As he comically describes himself as "a votary of the desk," a "notched and cropt scrivener", or, as he most probably is,

a brother of the quill, in another sense, even what is called an author, he should know that underworkers are not considered by brother workmen as dealing fairly by the craft, and are too likely to be frustrated in their undertakings. Yours sincerely, GEO. DYER.'

A Chapter on Ears, p. 518.—In some prefatory remarks to a review of Lamb's *Works*, reprinted from *The Examiner* in *The Indicator*, Jan. 31, Feb. 7, 1821, Leigh Hunt had observed: 'We believe we are taking no greater liberty with him [Charles Lamb] than our motives will warrant, when we add that he sometimes writes in the *London Magazine* under the signature of Elia.' In the following postscript to this essay in the *L. M.*, March, 1821, Lamb playfully rejoins to Hunt's disclosure:—

'P.S.—A writer, whose real name, it seems, is *Boldero*, but who has been entertaining the town for the last twelve months, with some very pleasant lucubrations, under the assumed signature of *Leigh Hunt*,[a] in his Indicator, of the 31st January last, has thought fit to insinuate, that I *Elia* do not write the little sketches which bear my signature, in this Magazine; but that the true author of them is a Mr. L——b. Observe the critical period at which he has chosen to impute the calumny!—on the very eve of the publication of our last number—affording no scope for explanation for a full month—during which time, I must needs lie writhing and tossing, under the cruel imputation of nonentity.—Good heavens! that a plain man must not be allowed *to be*——

'They call this an age of personality: but surely this spirit of anti-personality (if I may so express it) is something worse.

'Take away my moral reputation: I may live to discredit that calumny.

'Injure my literary fame,—I may write that up again—

'But when a gentleman is robbed of his identity, where is he?

'Other murderers stab but at our existence, a frail and perishing trifle at the best. But here is an assassin who aims at our very essence; who not only forbids us *to be* any longer, but *to have been* at all. Let our ancestors look to it——

'Is the parish register nothing? Is the house in Princes-street, Cavendish-square, where we saw the light six-and-forty years ago, nothing? Were our progenitors from stately Genoa, where we flourished four centuries back, before the barbarious name of Boldero[b] was known to a European mouth, nothing? Was the goodly scion of our name, transplanted into England, in the reign of the seventh Henry, nothing? Are the archives of the steel yard, in succeeding reigns (if haply they survive the fury of our envious

[a] Clearly a fictitious appellation; for if we admit the latter of these names to be in a manner English, what is *Leigh?* Christian nomenclature knows no such.

[b] It is clearly of transatlantic origin.

enemies) showing that we flourished in prime repute, as merchants, down to the period of the commonwealth, nothing ?

> 'Why then the world, and all that's in't is nothing—
> The covering sky is nothing, Bohemia nothing.—

'I am ashamed that this trifling writer should have power to move me so.'

In a paragraph headed *Elia versus Indicator* (*The Indicator*, No. 74, March 7, 1821) Hunt replies to this postscript in a similar strain.

Witches, and other Night-Fears, p. 558.—In Lamb's original MS. preserved in the Dyce-Forster collections at S. Kensington, this final paragraph reads as follows :—

'When I awoke I came to a determination to write prose all the rest of my life ; and with submission to some of our young writers, who are yet diffident of their powers, and balancing perhaps between verse and prose, they might not do unwisely to decide the preference by the texture of their natural dreams. If these are prosaic, they may depend upon it they have not much to expect in a creative way from their artificial ones. What dreams must not Spenser have had ! '

The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple, p. 574.—Apropos of the statement at the beginning of this essay that he 'was born, and passed the first seven years of his life, in the Temple', Lamb printed the following playful letter in the *L. M.*, vol. iv., No. xxiii. (Nov., 1821) under the *Lion's Head*, i.e., the department assigned to correspondence :—

'ELIA TO HIS CORRESPONDENTS.—A Correspondent, who writes himself Peter Ball, or Bell,—for his hand-writing is as ragged as his manners—admonishes me of the old saying, that some people (under a courteous periphrasis I slur his less ceremonious epithet) had need have good memories. In my "Old Benchers of the Inner Temple", I have delivered myself, and truly, a Templar born. Bell clamours upon this, and thinketh that he hath caught a fox. It seems that in a former paper, retorting upon a weekly scribbler who had called my good identity in question (see P.S. to my "Chapter on Ears"), I profess myself a native of some spot near Cavendish Square, deducing my remoter origin from Italy. But who does not see, except this tinkling cymbal, that in that idle fiction of Genoese ancestry I was answering a fool according to his folly—that Elia there expresseth himself ironically, as to an approved slanderer, who hath no right to the truth, and can be no fit recipient of it ? Such a one it is usual to leave to his delusions ; or, leading him from error still to contradictory error, to plunge him (as we say) deeper in the mire, and give him line till

he suspend himself. No understanding reader could be imposed upon by such obvious rhodomontade to suspect me for an alien, or believe me other than English.—To a second Correspondent, who signs himself "a Wiltshire man", and claims me for a countryman upon the strength of an equivocal phrase in my "Christ's Hospital", a more mannerly reply is due. Passing over the Genoese fable, which Bell makes such a ring about, he nicely detects a more subtle discrepancy, which Bell was too obtuse to strike upon. Referring to the passage (in page 484 of our second volume[a]), I must confess, that the term "native town", applied to Calne, *primâ facie* seems to bear out the construction which my friendly Correspondent is willing to put upon it. The context too, I am afraid, a little favours it. But where the words of an author, taken literally, compared with some other passage in his writings, admitted to be authentic, involve a palpable contradiction, it hath been the custom of the ingenuous commentator to smooth the difficulty by the supposition, that in the one case an allegorical or tropical sense was chiefly intended. So by the word "native", I may be supposed to mean a town where I might have been born; or where it might be desirable that I should have been born, as being situate in wholesome air, upon a dry chalky soil, in which I delight; or a town, with the inhabitants of which I passed some weeks, a summer or two ago, so agreeably, that they and it became in a manner native to me. Without some such latitude of interpretation in the present case, I see not how we can avoid falling into a gross error in physics, as to conceive that a gentleman may be born in two places, from which all modern and ancient testimony is alike abhorrent. Bacchus cometh the nearest to it, whom I remember Ovid to have honoured with the epithet "Twice born". But not to mention that he is so called (we conceive) in reference to the places *whence* rather than the places *where* he was delivered,—for by either birth he may probably be challenged for a Theban—in a strict way of speaking, he was a *filius femoris* by no means in the same sense as he had been before a *filius alvi*, for that latter was but a secondary and tralatitious way of being born, and he but a denizen of the second house of his geniture. Thus much by way of explanation was thought due to the courteous "Wiltshire man".—To "Indagator", "Investigator", "Incertus", and the rest of the pack, that are so importunate about the true localities of his birth—as if, forsooth, Elia were presently about to be passed to his parish—to all such churchwarden critics he answereth, that, any explanation here

[a] Imperfectus adhuc infans genetricis ab alvo
Eripitur, patrioque tener (si credere dignum est)
Insuitur femori——
Tutaque bis geniti sunt incunabula Bacchi.
Metamorph. lib. iii, 310.

given notwithstanding, he hath not so fixed his nativity (like a rusty vane) to one dull spot, but that, if he seeth occasion, or the argument shall demand it, he will be born again, in future papers, in whatever place, and at whatever period, shall seem good unto him.

'Modò me Thebis—modò Athenis.

'ELIA.'

A Complaint of the Decay of Beggars, &c., p. 621.—. . . 'feigned or not'. In the *L. M.* the essay continues :—

'"Pray God your honour relieve me," said a poor beadswoman to my friend L—— one day; "I have seen better days." "So have I, my good woman," retorted he, looking up at the welkin which was just then threatening a storm—and the jest (he will have it) was as good to the beggar as a tester.

'It was at all events kinder than consigning her to the stocks, or the parish beadle—

'But L. has a way of viewing things in rather a paradoxical light on some occasions.

'ELIA.

'P.S.—My friend Hume (not M.P.) has a curious manuscript in his possession, the original draught of the celebrated "Beggars' Petition" (who cannot say by heart the "Beggar's Petition"?) as it was written by some school usher (as I remember) with corrections interlined from the pen of Oliver Goldsmith. As a specimen of the doctor's improvement, I recollect one most judicious alteration—

A pamper'd menial drove me from the door.

'It stood originally—

A livery servant drove me, &c.

'Here is an instance of poetical or artificial language properly substituted for the phrase of common conversation; against Wordsworth.

'I think I must get H. to send it to the LONDON, as a corollary to the foregoing.

'N.B.—I am glad to see JANUS veering about to the old quarter. I feared he had been rust-bound.

'C. being asked why he did not like Gold's "London" as well as ours—it was in poor S.'s time—replied—

—Because there is no WEATHERCOCK
And that's the reason why.'

On Some of the Old Actors, p. 641.—'. . . house of misrule.' Here, in the *L. M.*, comes the following passage :—'There was "example for it", said Malvolio; "the lady of the Strachy married

the yeoman of the wardrobe." Possibly too he might remember—for it must have happened about his time—an instance of a Duchess of Malfy (a countrywoman of Olivia's, and her equal at least) descending from her state to court her steward—

> The misery of them that are born great!
> They are forced to woo, because none dare woo them.

'To be sure the lady was not very tenderly handled for it by her brothers in the sequel, but their vengeance appears to have been whetted rather by her presumption in re-marrying at all, (when they had meditated the keeping of her fortune in their family) than by her choice of an inferior, of Antonio's noble merits especially, for her husband; and, besides, Olivia's brother was just dead. Malvolio was a man of reading, and possibly reflected upon these lines, or something like them in his own country poetry—

> ——Ceremony has made many fools
> It is as easy way unto a duchess
> As to a hatted dame, if her love answer:
> But that by timorous honours, pale respects,
> Idle degrees of fear, men make their ways
> Hard of themselves.

'"'Tis but fortune, all is fortune. Maria once told me, she did affect me; and I have heard herself come thus near, that, should she fancy, it should be one of my complexion." If here was no encouragement, the devil is in it. I wish we could get at the private history of all this. Between the Countess herself, serious or dissembling—for one hardly knows how to apprehend this fantastical great lady—and the practices of that delicious little piece of mischief, Maria—

> The lime twigs laid
> By Machiavel the waiting maid—

'the man might well be rapt into a fool's paradise.'

'Richard, or rather Dicky Suett, &c.—p. 644. This and the seven following paragraphs are taken from the essay entitled *The Old Actors* (*L. M.*, October, 1822) which opens as follows:—

'THE OLD ACTORS

'I do not know a more mortifying thing than to be conscious of a foregone delight, with a total oblivion of the person and manner which conveyed it. In dreams I often stretch and strain after the countenance of Edwin, whom I once saw in Peeping Tom. I cannot now catch a feature of him. He is no more to me than Nokes or Pinkethman. Parsons, and still more Dodd, were near being lost to me, till I was refreshed with their portraits (fine treat) the other day at Mr. Mathews's gallery at Highgate; which, with the exception of the Hogarth pictures, a few years since exhibited in Pall

Mall, was the most delightful collection I ever gained admission to. There hang the players, in their single persons, and in grouped scenes, from the Restoration——Bettertons, Booths, Garricks, justifying the prejudices which we entertain for them—the Bracegirdles, the Mountforts, and the Oldfields, fresh as Cibber has described them—the Woffington (a true Hogarth) upon a couch, dallying and dangerous—the Screen Scene in Brinsley's famous comedy, with Smith and Mrs. Abingdon, whom I have not seen, and the rest, whom having seen, I see still there. There is Henderson, unrivalled in Comus, whom I saw at second hand in the elder Harley—Harley, the rival of Holman, in Horatio—Holman, with the bright glittering teeth in Lothario, and the deep paviour's sighs in Romeo—the jolliest person ("our son is fat") of any Hamlet I have yet seen, with the most laudable attempts (for a personable man) at looking melancholy—and Pope, the abdicated monarch of tragedy and comedy, in Harry the Eighth and Lord Townley. There hang the two Aickins, brethren in mediocrity—Wroughton, who in Kitely seemed to have forgotten that in prouder days he had personated Alexander—the specious form of John Palmer, with the special effrontery of Bobby—Bensley, with the trumpet-tongue, and little Quick (the retired Dioclesian of Islington) with his squeak like a Bart'lemew fiddle. There are fixed, cold as in life, the immovable features of Moody, who, afraid of o'erstepping nature, sometimes stopped short of her—and the restless fidgetiness of Lewis, who, with no such fears, not seldom leaped o' the other side. There hang Farren and Whitfield, and Burton and Phillimore, names of small account in those times, but which, remembered now, or casually recalled by the sight of an old play-bill, with their associated recordations, can 'drown an eye unused to flow'. There too hangs (not far removed from them in death) the graceful plainness of the first Mrs. Pope, with a voice unstrung by age, but which, in her better days, must have competed with the silver tones of Barry himself, so enchanting in decay do I remember it—of all her lady parts exceeding herself in the Lady Quakeress (there earth touched heaven!) of O'Keefe, when she played it to the "merry cousin" of Lewis—and Mrs. Mattocks, the sensiblest of viragos—and Miss Pope, a gentlewoman ever, to the verge of ungentility, with Churchill's compliment still burnishing upon her gay Honeycomb lips. There are the two Bannisters, and Sedgwick, and Kelly, and Dignum (Diggy), and the bygone features of Mrs. Ward, matchless in Lady Loverule; and the collective majesty of the whole Kemble family; and (Shakspeare's woman) Dora Jordan; and, by her, *two Antics*, who in former and in latter days have chiefly beguiled us of our griefs; whose portraits we shall strive to recall, for the sympathy of those who may not have had the benefit of viewing the matchless Highgate Collection.

'MR. SUETT

'O for a "slip-shod muse", to celebrate in numbers, loose and shambling as himself, the merits and the person of Mr. Richard Suett, comedian!

'Richard, or rather Dicky Suett—for so in his lifetime he was best pleased,' &c., pp. 644-6, above.

On the Artificial Comedy of the Last Century, p. 656.—'. . . of present fashionable tragedy.' In the *L. M.* the essay proceeds without any break in the paragraph, as follows:—

'The story of his swallowing opium pills to keep him lively upon the first night of a certain tragedy, we may presume to be a piece of retaliatory pleasantry on the part of the suffering author. But, indeed, John had the art of diffusing a complacent equable dulness (which you knew not where to quarrel with) over a piece which he did not like, beyond any of his contemporaries. John Kemble had made up his mind early, that all the good tragedies, which could be written, had been written; and he resented any new attempt. His shelves were full. The old standards were scope enough for his ambition. He ranged in them absolute—and "fair in Otway, full in Shakspeare shone." He succeeded to the old lawful thrones, and did not care to adventure bottomry with a Sir Edward Mortimer, or any casual speculator that offered. I remember, too acutely for my peace, the deadly extinguisher which he put upon my friend G.'s "Antonio." G., satiate with visions of political justice (possibly not to be realized in our time), or willing to let the sceptical worldlings see, that his anticipations of the future did not preclude a warm sympathy for men as they are and have been—wrote a tragedy. He chose a story, affecting, romantic, Spanish—the plot simple, without being naked—the incidents uncommon, without being overstrained. Antonio, who gives the name to the piece, is a sensitive young Castilian, who, in a fit of his country honour, immolates his sister——

'But I must not anticipate the catastrophe—the play, reader, is extant in choice English—and you will employ a spare half crown not injudiciously in the quest of it.

'The conception was bold, and the dénouement—the time and place, in which the hero of it existed, considered—not much out of keeping; yet it must be confessed, that it required a delicacy of handling both from the author and the performer, so as not much to shock the prejudices of a modern English audience. G., in my opinion, had done his part.

'John, who was in familiar habits with the philosopher, had undertaken to play Antonio. Great expectations were formed. A philosopher's first play was a new era. The night arrived. I was favoured with a seat in an advantageous box, between the author

and his friend M——. G. sate cheerful and confident. In his friend M.'s looks, who had perused the manuscript, I read some terror. Antonio in the person of John Philip Kemble at length appeared, starched out in a ruff which no one could dispute, and in most irreproachable mustachios. John always dressed most provokingly correct on these occasions. The first act swept by, solemn and silent. It went off, as G. assured M., exactly as the opening act of a piece—the protasis—should do. The cue of the spectators was to be mute. The characters were but in their introduction. The passions and the incidents would be developed hereafter. Applause hitherto would be impertinent. Silent attention was the effect all-desirable. Poor M. acquiesced—but in his honest friendly face I could discern a working which told how much more acceptable the plaudit of a single hand (however misplaced) would have been than all this reasoning. The second act (as in duty bound) rose a little in interest; but still John kept his forces under—in policy, as G. would have it—and the audience were most complacently attentive. The protasis, in fact, was scarcely unfolded. The interest would warm in the next act, against which a special incident was provided. M. wiped his cheek, flushed with a friendly perspiration—'tis M.'s way of showing his zeal—' from every pore of him a perfume falls—'. I honour it above Alexander's. He had once or twice during this act joined his palms in a feeble endeavour to elicit a sound—they emitted a solitary noise without an echo—there was no deep to answer to his deep. G. repeatedly begged him to be quiet. The third act at length brought on the scene which was to warm the piece, progressively, to the final flaming forth of the catastrophe. A philosophic calm settled upon the clear brow of G., as it approached. The lips of M. quivered. A challenge was held forth upon the stage, and there was promise of a fight. The pit roused themselves on this extraordinary occasion, and, as their manner is, seemed disposed to make a ring,—when suddenly Antonio, who was the challenged, turning the tables upon the hot challenger, Don Gusman (who by the way should have had his sister), baulks his humour, and the pit's reasonable expectation at the same time, with some speeches out of the new philosophy against duelling. The audience were here fairly caught—their courage was up, and on the alert—a few blows, *ding-dony*, as R—s, the dramatist, afterwards expressed it to me, might have done the business, when their most exquisite moral sense was suddenly called in to assist in the mortifying negation of their own pleasure. They could not applaud for disappointment; they would not condemn for morality's sake. The interest stood stone still; and John's manner was not calculated to unpetrify it. It was Christmas time, and the atmosphere furnished some pretext for asthmatic affections. One began to cough—his neighbour sympathized with him—till a cough became epidemical. But when, from being half artificial in the pit, the cough got frightfully naturalized

among the fictitious persons of the drama, and Antonio himself (albeit it was not set down in the stage directions) seemed more intent upon relieving his own lungs than the distresses of the author and his friends,—then G. 'first knew fear'; and, mildly turning to M., intimated that he had not been aware that Mr. K. laboured under a cold; and that the performance might possibly have been postponed with advantage for some nights farther—still keeping the same serene countenance, while M. sweat like a bull. It would be invidious to pursue the fates of this ill-starred evening. In vain did the plot thicken in the scenes that followed; in vain did the dialogue wax more passionate and stirring, and the progress of the sentiment point more and more clearly to the arduous development which impended. In vain the action was accelerated, while the acting stood still. From the beginning John had taken his stand; had wound himself up to an even tenor of stately declamation, from which no exigence of dialogue or person could make him swerve for an instant. To dream of his rising with the scene (the common trick of tragedians) was preposterous; for, from the onset, he had planted himself, as upon a terraee, on an eminence vastly above the audience, and he kept that sublime level to the end. He looked from his throne of elevated sentiment upon the under-world of spectators with a most sovereign and becoming contempt. There was excellent pathos delivered out to them: an they would receive it, so; an they would not receive it, so; there was no offence against decorum in all this; nothing to condemn, to damn. Not an irreverent symptom of a sound was to be heard. The procession of verbiage stalked on through four and five acts, no one venturing to predict what would come of it, when towards the winding up of the latter, Antonio, with an irrelevancy that seemed to stagger Elvira herself—for she had been coolly arguing the point of honour with him—suddenly whips out a poniard, and stabs his sister to the heart. The effect was as if a murder had been committed in cold blood. The whole house rose up in clamorous indignation, demanding justice. The feeling rose far above hisses. I believe at that instant, if they could have got him, they would have torn the unfortunate author to pieces. Not that the act itself was so exorbitant, or of a complexion different from what they themselves would have applauded upon another occasion, in a Brutus or an Appius, but for want of attending to Antonio's *words*, which palpably led to the expectation of no less dire an event, instead of being seduced by his *manner*, which seemed to promise a sleep of a less alarming nature than it was his cue to inflict upon Elvira, they found themselves betrayed into an accompliceship of murder, a perfect misprision of parricide, while they dreamed of nothing less. M., I believe, was the only person who suffered acutely from the failure; for G. thenceforward, with a serenity unattainable but by the true philosophy, abandoning a precaricus popularity, retired into his fast hold of

speculation,—the drama in which the world was to be his tiring room, and remote posterity his applauding spectators at once, and actors.'

Preface to *The Last Essays of Elia*, p. 659.—In the *L. M.*, Jan., 1823, this essay began as follows :—

'A CHARACTER OF THE LATE ELIA

'BY A FRIEND

'This gentleman, who for some months past had been in a declining way, hath at length paid his final tribute to nature. He just lived long enough (it was what he wished) to see his papers collected into a volume. The pages of the LONDON MAGAZINE will henceforth know him no more.

'Exactly at twelve last night his queer spirit departed, and the bells of Saint Bride's rang him out with the old year. The mournful vibrations were caught in the dining-room of his friends T. and H.; and the company, assembled there to welcome in another First of January, checked their carousals in mid-mirth and were silent. Janus wept. The gentle P——r, in a whisper, signified his intention of devoting an Elegy; and Allan C——, nobly forgetful of his countrymen's wrongs, vowed a Memoir to his *manes*, full and friendly as a Tale of Lyddal-cross.

'I am now at liberty to confess,' &c.

'. . . some of his writings.'—p. 662. In the *L. M.* the essay proceeds :—

'He left little property behind him. Of course, the little that is left (chiefly in India bonds) devolves upon his cousin Bridget. A few critical dissertations were found in his escritoire, which have been handed over to the Editor of this Magazine, in which it is to be hoped they will shortly appear, retaining his accustomed signature.

'He has himself not obscurely hinted that his employment lay in a public office. The gentlemen in the Export department of the East India House will forgive me, if I acknowledge the readiness with which they assisted me in the retrieval of his few manuscripts. They pointed out in a most obliging manner the desk, at which he had been planted for forty years; showed me ponderous tomes of figures, in his own remarkably neat hand, which, more properly than his few printed tracts, might be called his "Works". They seemed affectionate to his memory, and universally commended his expertness in book-keeping. It seems he was the inventor of some ledger, which should combine the precision and certainty of the Italian double entry (I think they call it) with the brevity and facility of some newer German system—but I am not able to appreciate the worth of the discovery. I have often heard him express a warm regard for his associates in office, and how fortunate he considered himself in having his lot thrown in amongst them.

There is more sense, more discourse, more shrewdness, and even talent, among these clerks (he would say) than in twice the number of authors by profession that I have conversed with. He would brighten up sometimes upon the "old days of the India House", when he consorted with Woodroffe, and Wissett, and Peter Corbet (a descendant and worthy representative, bating the point of sanctity, of old facetious Bishop Corbet), and Hoole who translated Tasso, and Bartlemy Brown whose father (God assoil him therefore!) modernised Walton—and sly warm-hearted old Jack Cole (King Cole they called him in those days), and Campe, and Fombelle—and a world of choice spirits, more than I can remember to name, who associated in those days with Jack Burrell (the *bon vivant* of the South Sea House), and little Eyton (said to be a *facsimile* of Pope—he was a miniature of a gentleman) that was cashier under him, and Dan Voight of the Custom House, that left the famous library.

'Well, Elia is gone—for aught I know, to be reunited with them—and these poor traces of his pen are all we have to show for it. How little survives of the wordiest authors! Of all they said or did in their lifetime, a few glittering words only! His essays found some favourers, as they appeared separately; they shuffled their way in the crowd well enough singly; how they will *read*, now they are brought together, is a question for the publishers, who have thus ventured to draw out into one piece his "weaved-up follies".

'PHIL-ELIA.'

In the *L. M.* for March, 1823, there appeared, under *The Lion's Head*, the following notice, purporting to come from *Elia* himself in contradiction of the announcement of his death made in the foregoing *Character*, and in T. G. Wainewright's (Janus Weathercock's) article in the same number (Jan., 1833), entitled *Janus Weatherbound; or, The Weathercock Steadfast for Lack of Oil.* The 'posthumous Essay' is Lamb's *Rejoicings on the New Year's Coming of Age*, signed *Elia's Ghost.*

'Elia returns his thanks to the facetious Janus Weathercock, who, during his late unavoidable excursion to the Isles of Sark, Guernsey and Jersey, took advantage of his absence to plot a sham account of his death; and to impose upon the town a posthumous Essay, signed by his Ghost—which, how like it is to any of the undoubted Essays of the author, may be seen by comparing it with his volume just published. One or two former papers, with his signature, which are not re-printed in the volume, he has reason to believe were pleasant forgeries by the same ingenious hand.'

Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading, p. 691.—'. . . indifferent to the five points.' Here in the *L. M.* comes the following paragraph, omitted in *The Last Essays*, 1833:—'I was once amused—there is a pleasure in *affecting* affectation—at the in-

dignation of a crowd that was justling in with me at the pit-door of Covent Garden theatre, to have a sight of Master Betty—then at once in his dawn and his meridian—in Hamlet. I had been invited quite unexpectedly to join a party, whom I met near the door of the playhouse, and I happened to have in my hand a large octavo of Johnson and Steevens's Shakspeare, which, the time not admitting of my carrying it home, of course went with me to the theatre. Just in the very heat and pressure of the doors opening—the *rush*, as they term it—I deliberately held the volume over my head, open at the scene in which the young Roscius had been most cried up, and quietly read by the lamp-light. The clamour became universal. "The affectation of the fellow," cried one. "Look at that gentleman *reading*, papa," squeaked a young lady, who in her admiration of the novelty almost forgot her fears. I read on. "He ought to have his book knocked out of his hand," exclaimed a pursy cit, whose arms were too fast pinioned to his side to suffer him to execute his kind intention. Still I read on—and, till the time came to pay my money, kept as unmoved, as Saint Antony at his Holy Offices, with the satyrs, apes, and hobgoblins, mopping, and making mouths at him, in the picture, while the good man sits undisturbed at the sight, as if he were sole tenant of the desart.—The individual rabble (I recognised more than one of their ugly faces), had damned a slight piece of mine but a few nights before, and I was determined the culprits should not a second time put me out of countenance.'

The Superannuated Man, p. 712.—'. . . unbending and re-creation.' Here in the text of 1825 the following footnote is appended:—'Our ancestors, the noble old Puritans of Cromwell's day, could distinguish between a day of religious rest and a day of recreation; and while they exacted a rigorous abstinence from all amusements (even to the walking out of nursery maids with their little charges in the fields) upon the Sabbath; in the lieu of the superstitious observance of the Saint's day, which they abrogated, they humanely gave to the apprentices, and poorer sort of people, every alternate Thursday for a day of entire sport and recreation. A strain of piety and policy to be commended above the profane mockery of the Stuarts and their Book of Sports.'

'. . . and what is it all for?' p. 718. Here, in 1825, comes the passage:—'I recite those verses of Cowley, which so mightily agree with my constitution.

> 'Business! the frivolous pretence
> Of human lusts to shake off innocence:
> Business! the grave impertinence:
> Business! the thing which I of all things hate:
> Business! the contradiction of my fate

'Or I repeat my own lines, written in my Clerk state:—

'Who first invented work—and bound the free
And holyday-rejoicing spirit down
To the ever-haunting importunity
Of business, in the green fields, and the town—
To plough, loom, anvil, spade—and oh! most sad,
To this dry drudgery of the desk's dead wood?
Who but the Being unblest, alien from good,
Sabbathless Satan! he who his unglad
Task ever plies 'mid rotatory burnings,
That round and round incalculably reel—
For wrath divine hath made him like a wheel—
In that red realm from whence are no returnings;
Where toiling, and turmoiling, ever and aye
He, and his thoughts, keep pensive worky-day!

'O this divine Leisure!—Reader, if thou art furnished with the Old Series of the London, turn incontinently to the third volume (page 367), and you will see my present condition there touched in a "Wish" by a daintier pen than I can pretend to. I subscribe to that Sonnet *toto corde*.'

Some Sonnets of Sir Philip Sydney, p. 743.—'. . . diet of dainty words.' Here in the *L. M.* the following footnote is appended:—'A profusion of verbal dainties, with a disproportionate lack of matter and circumstance, is I think one reason of the coldness with which the public has received the poetry of a nobleman now living; which, upon the score of exquisite diction alone, is entitled to something better than neglect. I will venture to copy one of his Sonnets in this place, which for quiet sweetness, and unaffected morality, has scarcely its parallel in our language.

'TO A BIRD THAT HAUNTED THE WATERS OF LACKEN IN THE WINTER

'*By Lord Thurlow*

'O melancholy Bird, a winter's day,
Thou standest by the margin of the pool,
And, taught by God, dost thy whole being school
To Patience, which all evil can allay.
God has appointed thee the Fish thy prey;
And given thyself a lesson to the Fool
Unthrifty, to submit to moral rule,
And his unthinking course by thee to weigh.
There need not schools, nor the Professor's chair,
Though these be good, true wisdom to impart.
He who has not enough, for these, to spare
Of time, or gold, may yet amend his heart,
And teach his soul, by brooks, and rivers fair:
Nature is always wise in every part.'

Newspapers Thirty-five Years Ago, pp. 746–51.—Mr. Lucas (*Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, 1903, vol. ii, p. 441) gives the following paragraphs from the *Morning Post* of 1803, which he takes to be Lamb's work. The paragraph cited in the essay, however, does not appear in the columns of the *Post*:—

Oct. 8.—'The fugitive and mercurial matter, of which a *Lady's blush* is made, after coursing from its natural position, the *cheek*, to the *tip* of the *elbow*, and thence diverging for a time to the *knee*, has finally settled in the *legs*, where, in the form of a pair of *red hose*, it combines with the posture and situation of *the times*, to put on a most *warlike* and *martial appearance*.'

Nov. 2.—'BARTRAM, who, as a *traveller*, was possessed of a very *lively fancy*, describes vast plains in the interior of America, where his *horse's fetlocks* for miles were dyed a perfect *blood colour*, in the juice of the *wild strawberries*. A less ardent fancy than BARTRAM'S may apply this beautiful phenomenon of summer, to solve the present *strawberry appearance* of the *female leg* this autumn in England.'

Nov. 3.—'The *roseate tint*, so agreeably diffused through the silk stockings of our females, induces the belief that the *dye is cast* for their lovers.'

Nov. 8.—'A popular superstition in the North of Germany is said to be the true original of the well-known sign of Mother REDCAP. Who knows but that *late posterity*, when, what is regarded by us now as *fashion*, shall have long been classed among the *superstitious observances* of an age gone by, may dignify their signs with the antiquated personification of a Mother RED LEGS?'

Nov. 9.—'Curiosity is on tip-toe for the arrival of ELPHY BEY'S fair *Circassian* Ladies. The attraction of their *naturally-placed, fine, proverbial bloom*, is only wanting to reduce the *wandering colour* in the "elbows" and "ancles" of our *belles*, back to its native *metropolis* and *palace*, the "cheek".'

Nov. 22.—'*Pink stockings* beneath *dark pelices* are emblems of *Sincerity* and *Discretion*; signifying a *warm heart* beneath a *cool exterior*.'

Nov. 29.—'The decline of red stockings is as fatal to the wits, as the going out of a fashion to an overstocked jeweller: some of these gentry have literally for some months past *fed* on *roses*.'

Dec. 21.—'The fashion of red stockings, so much cried down, dispraised, and followed, is on the eve of departing, to be consigned to the family tomb of "all the fashions", where sleep in peace the *ruffs* and *hoops*, and *fardingales* of past centuries; and

> 'All its beauty, all its pomp, decays
> Like *Courts removing*, or like *ending plays*.'

A Death-Bed, p. 779.—'Lettered he was not . . . the dead, if

you can.' Here the text of 1833 departs more widely from that of the original letter to Crabb Robinson, which runs:—

'Letters he knew nothing of, nor did his reading extend beyond the pages of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Yet there was a pride of literature about him from being amongst books (he was librarian) and from some scraps of doubtful Latin which he had picked up in his office of entering students, that gave him very diverting airs of pedantry. Can I forget the erudite look with which, when he had been in vain trying to make out a black-letter text of Chaucer in the Temple Library, he laid it down and told me that—"in those old books, Charley, there is sometimes a deal of very indifferent spelling"; and seemed to console himself in the reflection! His jokes, for he had his jokes, are now ended; but they were old trusty perennials, staples that pleased after *decies repetita*, and were always as good as new. One song he had, which was reserved for the night of Christmas Day, which we always spent in the Temple. It was an old thing, and spoke of the flat bottoms of our foes, and the possibility of their coming over in darkness, and alluded to threats of an invasion many years blown over; and when he came to the part—

> We'll still make 'em run, and we'll still make 'em sweat,
> In spite of the Devil and Brussels Gazette,

his eyes would sparkle as with the freshness of an impending event. And what is the *Brussels Gazette* now? I cry while I enumerate these trifles. "How shall we tell them in a stranger's ear?" His poor good girls will now have to receive their afflicted mother in an unsuccessful hovel in an obscure village in Herts, where they have been long struggling to make a school without effect; and poor deaf Richard, and the more helpless for being so, is thrown on the wide world.

'My first motive in writing, and indeed in calling on you, was to ask if you were enough acquainted with any of the Benchers to lay a plain statement before them of the circumstances of the family. I almost fear not, for you are of another hall. But if you can oblige me and my poor friend, who is now insensible to any favours, pray exert yourself. You cannot say too much good of poor Norris and his poor wife. Yours ever, CHARLES LAMB.'

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